



Reflecting on Our Impactful Visit to Austin - Pearland Day Highlights

Today is Super Tuesday, a pivotal moment in our state's primary elections, we're reminded of the privilege and power of our voices in shaping the future. It's a timely reminder of why our recent Pearland Day in Austin was not just a visit, but a mission to make those voices heard at the highest levels of our state government.

Last week, the Pearland Chamber of Commerce led a delegation of over 50 committed members to the heart of Texas politics in Austin. Our agenda saw us engaging directly with more than 30 legislative offices and 10 state agencies, advocating for policies and initiatives that support the growth and prosperity of our business community and Pearland at large. These meetings centered around key areas from our 2024 Public Policy Guide, with a significant focus on our Mental Health Priorities, Economic Tools to Maintain Texas' Competitiveness, Public Education Priorities, and crucial infrastructure projects like the Grand Parkway Segment B.

Mental Health Priorities: We highlighted the critical need for a 24/7 Behavioral Health Facility in Brazoria County with a dedicated adolescent unit, the expansion of School-Based Counseling Services, and an increase in the pipeline of qualified counselors. Our discussions underscored the ongoing focus required for mental health, especially post-COVID-19, acknowledging that Texas, ranking low for access to mental health care, needs continuous improvement in this area.

Public Education Priorities: Our conversations included a strong emphasis on increasing teacher pay and the Basic Allotment, as well as ensuring public tax dollars stay within public schools. We shared our belief that these steps are crucial for attracting and retaining talented educators, reducing reliance on local taxes, and strengthening our public education system.

Economic Tools: We discussed the importance of maintaining the economic tools that keep Texas competitive, such as those introduced in HB 5 – 88th Session. These tools have been vital for attracting large, capital-intensive projects to our state and our region.

Infrastructure Projects: The funding and construction of the Grand Parkway Segment B was a key infrastructure topic, with its importance as an evacuation route and its role in reducing congestion and supporting economic development in our region.

As members of the Pearland Chamber of Commerce, your support and participation in initiatives like Pearland Day in Austin are vital. These visits are more than just annual events; they are a cornerstone of our legislative agenda and a testament to our commitment to making a difference. By standing together, we can ensure that the interests of our business community and our city are represented and respected at every level of government.

I encourage you to stay engaged and involved. Whether it's by participating in future visits, joining our Governmental Relations Committee, or simply staying informed about our initiatives, your involvement is crucial. Together, we can continue to build on the momentum of Pearland Day in Austin and work towards a brighter future for our community.

Let's continue to make our voices heard and our impact felt.

Best,

Jim Johnson, CCE, IOM
President/CEO
Pearland Chamber of Commerce