

News Release

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Texas Trails National Curve

Lone Star State Lags Behind Others On A Slew of Indicators, Report Finds

Austin, Texas—A disturbing new report reveals that Texas does not measure up well when benchmarked against other states on 150 different socio-economic indicators that measure the quality of life.

The [State of the Lone Star State: How Life in Texas Measures Up](#) presents data that rank Texas' performances in such diverse areas as the Environment, Education, the Economy, Human Services, Public Safety and Democracy. Compared to the 49 competing states, the data depict a Lone Star State that:

- Flunks environmental protection;
- Contents itself with educational mediocrity;
- Is one of the least compassionate welfare states;
- Spent billions on a huge penal system that has not delivered low crime rates; and
- Has one of the nation's worst voter-turnout rates.

“Texas has a resilient character and natural beauty that have survived massive abuses by its government and industries,” said report author Paul Robbins. “Still, the quality of life in Texas compares poorly with the rest of the nation. Texas leads the nation in hazardous waste and air pollution, falls behind most every state in health care access, and treats its poor as if it was a third world country. In recent years, our governor and legislature have squandered countless opportunities to fix these problems.”

The 150 indicators in the report reflect the quality of everyday life lived by millions of Texans. It will help Texans figure out how their state compares with others in terms of: per capita income; access to health care; the cleanliness of its air and water; educating its children; and the pervasiveness of hunger, crime and affordable housing. The states that perform well on these indicators provide a higher quality of life for their people.

On many of these indicators, Texas does not stack up well to the competition. While it doesn't bottom out on each indicator—and scores well on several—it ranks among the bottom 10 states on nearly two-thirds of the 150 indicators.

“Texas derives great bragging rights from its mythic lore,” said Texans for Public Justice Director Craig McDonald. “Unfortunately, modern life in Texas is nothing to brag about. We can and should do better.”

The Texas-sized problems presented in The [State of the Lone Star State](#) are bipartisan byproducts of a majority of Texas politicians who have buried their heads in the sand for decades. Governor George W. Bush did not create these problems—nor did he take major steps to solve them. Presented with unprecedented budget surpluses, state politicians have wasted a golden opportunity to turn the tide on these problems. The state’s political establishment continues to serve big business interests while neglecting the needs of the majority.

The data in this report were compiled from various governmental and non-governmental sources. The report cites these sources and—in most cases—provides links to corresponding Internet websites.

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[Texans for Public Justice](#) is a non-profit, non-partisan research and advocacy organization that tracks the role of money in Texas politics.