

July 23, 2021

The Honorable Greg Abbott, Governor  
The Honorable Dan Patrick, Lieutenant Governor  
The Honorable Dade Phelan, Speaker of the House  
The Honorable Jane Nelson, Chair, Senate Finance Committee  
The Honorable Greg Bonnen, Chair, House Appropriations Committee

Ladies and Gentlemen:

In accordance with my responsibilities under the Texas Constitution, I provided you and the members of the 87<sup>th</sup> Legislature an estimate of revenue available for the First Called Session. In that estimate, I noted that the strong rebound in the economy, savings realized from agency budget cuts and the replacement of eligible general revenue-related appropriations with federal relief funds have increased available revenue.

When the regular session began in January, significant uncertainty remained in our revenue outlook as COVID cases and hospital counts were rising and the efficacy of the national vaccine rollout remained unclear. While uncertainty as to the ultimate direction of the Texas economy continues as a result of labor constraints, supply chain bottlenecks and increased instances of the delta and other coronavirus variants, the Texas economy appears poised for continued growth, and our economic outlook is more optimistic than just a few months ago.

The combination of this additional revenue and a more optimistic economic outlook gives the Legislature the opportunity to focus on issues lawmakers were unable to address in the regular session. I applaud the Governor for placing critical priorities on the agenda, and I support your efforts to address key issues like cybersecurity, border security, tax relief, a “13th check” for retired teachers, funding for foster care programs and other important needs, such as funding for broadband expansion across our state. Discretionary funding was not available for these crucial areas during the regular session, yet now that Texas’ economic outlook is more optimistic, I hope we are able to deal with each of these issues before the end of the First Called Session.

As a former lawmaker, I understand and respect policy differences, but it is my sincere hope that we can resolve those differences and take advantage of this opportunity.

Sincerely,



Glenn Hegar

