



September 30th, 2026

Chairman Vasut and Members
House Select Committee on Governmental Oversight
Texas House of Representatives

RE: Written Testimony on Safeguarding Taxpayer Funds

Chairman Vasut and Members of the Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments regarding the safeguarding of taxpayer funds used to contract with third-party consultants and nongovernmental organizations.

Private organizations can sometimes provide specialized expertise or deliver services more efficiently than government. Contracting with them is not inherently improper. However, outsourcing a governmental function must never mean outsourcing public accountability.

Taxpayers deserve to know who is receiving their money, what services were promised, what was delivered, and whether the expenditure produced measurable public value. This is particularly important when contractors help shape policies involving health and human services, public safety, homelessness, or other matters with significant consequences for taxpayers and individual liberty.

Texas should establish neutral transparency and accountability rules for these arrangements. Local governments should publicly disclose each contractor, the amount paid, the scope of work, expected deliverables, performance measures, subcontractors, potential conflicts of interest, and any advocacy or lobbying conducted in connection with the contract. Sole-source contracts should require a public explanation, while substantial agreements should ordinarily be competitively procured, periodically reviewed, and rebid rather than automatically renewed.

Government should also distinguish between purchasing a defined service and subsidizing political influence. Public funds should not be used by contractors to lobby the government that hired them, advocate for expanded government programs from which they may benefit, or conduct public campaigns intended to increase their own funding. Organizations remain free to advocate using voluntarily contributed private resources, but taxpayers should not be compelled to finance advocacy with which they may disagree.

Accountability must focus on results, not merely compliance paperwork. Contracts should include clear objectives, reporting requirements, audit authority, and remedies when promised services are not delivered. Governments should not measure success by how much money was distributed or how many organizations received contracts. They should demonstrate what taxpayers received in return.

At the same time, reforms should remain viewpoint-neutral. The Legislature should not create favored or disfavored classes of contractors based on ideology, political affiliation, nonprofit status, or organizational mission. The same disclosure, procurement, performance, and conflict-of-interest standards should apply equally to all recipients of public funds.

The Texas Liberty Compact calls for ending taxpayer-funded lobbying and making government transparent. Those principles apply whether public money is spent directly by a government employee or indirectly through a private contractor. Public dollars remain public dollars, and every recipient should be accountable for their use.

Texas should preserve the legitimate benefits of private contracting while ensuring that it does not become a vehicle for favoritism, political advocacy, or unaccountable spending. Transparency, competition, measurable outcomes, and neutral rules provide the proper framework.

Thank you for your consideration.

For Liberty, For Texas!

Jeremy D. Kitchen
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