



September 30th, 2026

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

RE: Written Testimony on Texas-New Mexico Boundary

Chairman Vasut and Members of the Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments regarding the constitutional, fiscal, and economic implications of adding territory currently within New Mexico to Texas.

The discussion surrounding Lea County reflects genuine questions about self-government, political representation, state sovereignty, and the relationship between communities and the governments exercising authority over them. Texans should take those concerns seriously, but cultural or political affinity alone cannot alter state boundaries.

A local referendum may demonstrate public support and provide democratic legitimacy, but it cannot unilaterally transfer territory between states. Any lawful process must proceed through the constitutional actions of the affected states and the federal government. The Texas Legislature, New Mexico Legislature, and Congress would each have indispensable roles. Neither a governor nor another executive official should attempt to substitute proclamations, negotiations, or administrative agreements for the required legislative process.

Consent should also be genuine and specific. Residents of each affected county should have an opportunity to vote after receiving clear information regarding the legal, fiscal, and governmental consequences. Approval should not be inferred from general political dissatisfaction or imposed upon a county because neighboring counties support the proposal.

Before Texas agrees to accept additional territory, lawmakers should require an independent and publicly available fiscal analysis. That analysis should examine anticipated revenue, infrastructure conditions, public debt, schools, roads, courts, health and human services, water rights, public lands, pension obligations, law enforcement, regulatory transition costs, and any division of assets or liabilities between the states.

Existing contracts, property titles, water interests, licenses, legal proceedings, and other vested rights would also require protection. Residents and businesses should know how Texas law would apply during the transition and whether existing obligations would remain enforceable. Boundary legislation should not create uncertainty over private property or invite prolonged litigation. Texas should not use subsidies, special tax treatment, or preferential regulatory arrangements to entice counties to join the state. Any accepted territory should enter under the same generally applicable laws, taxes, protections, and responsibilities governing comparable Texas communities. Political support for the proposal should not become a vehicle for corporate welfare or special privileges.

The committee should also consider representation and accountability. Any transition plan must address congressional and legislative districts, county governance, judicial administration, elections, and the continuity of local services. Those decisions belong to legislatures acting through public law, not executive officials negotiating beyond public scrutiny.

The Texas Liberty Compact calls for restoring legislative supremacy, protecting private property, making government transparent, and preserving individual liberty. Those principles do not dictate whether Lea County should become part of Texas. They do dictate how the question should be considered.

Texas should remain open to the expressed wishes of neighboring communities while insisting upon informed consent, constitutional process, fiscal transparency, equal treatment, and legislative accountability.

Thank you for your consideration.

For Liberty, For Texas!

Jeremy D. Kitchen
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