

## RESTORE SUMMERS FOR TEXAS FAMILIES, SMALL BUSINESSES AND THE ECONOMY

### RESTORE SUMMERS - CONSISTENT SCHOOL CALENDAR OVERVIEW:

In 2006, the Texas Legislature established the 4th Monday in August as a state-wide, uniform start date for public schools (Sec. 25.0811, Education Code).

In 2015, H.B. 1842 became law, creating a "Districts of Innovation" (DOI) program that allows participating school districts to exempt themselves from 67 state requirements, one of which is the uniform, 4th Monday in August start date. Now:

- More than 80% of Texas' 1,200 ISDs have declared themselves DOIs. Their "innovation" of choice is the exemption from the uniform school start date, without providing any more instructional days beyond the state minimum, and numerous inconsistent start dates.
- **No quantitative data exists showing a direct cause and effect between early start dates and improved student achievement, and in fact recent studies have found there is no additional educational benefit to non-traditional, longer school years.** (1)
- In his 2017 study, noted Texas economist Dr. Ray Perryman concluded that moving the average school start date in Texas just one week earlier would cost the state a billion dollars in lost economic activity, more than 7,500 permanent jobs, and \$62.1 million in lost tax revenues. (2)
- **This is not simply a matter of local control, what one ISD chooses for its start date tremendously impacts business activity across the State; disrupts precious family time over the summer; limits opportunities for kids to work, attend camps and enrichment activities; or for teachers to attend training and work an often needed second job; and assumes that schools know better than parents how kids and families should spend their time.**

### THE ISSUE:

Inconsistent school start dates have disrupted private sector business operations throughout the state, causing reports of significant revenue losses, reductions in operating hours and operating capacities, cancelled business expansions, and reductions in workforce (including summer jobs once available to school kids and teachers) as businesses have been forced to scale back or cancel expansion plans entirely in order to adjust to a dramatically shrinking family customer market disrupted and altered by early school start dates. These losses are being most profoundly felt by small businesses which comprise at least 70% of the Texas Travel and Tourism Industry. Many small businesses, such as accommodations, retailers, attractions, summer camps, state park concessionaires, sole proprietorships, independent contractors, etc., are reporting double-digit percentage decreases in business volume and revenues. **Some small businesses have reported losing millions of dollars in revenues since DOI took effect.** There are additional reports that planned capital improvements and business expansions have been shuttered, and in some cases, redirected to other states because the shrinking summer family travel market in Texas no longer makes such investments viable in our state. Without a full summer family travel period, the short-term and long-term outlook for many of these businesses is dubious.

### THE SOLUTION:

Support state public policy solutions, such as consistent school start dates, which maximize state revenues without requiring any new or increased taxes. **Maintain the current state statute of Fourth Monday in August, the consistent start date; and/or no earlier than the third Wednesday in August for DOI districts.** This will restore a full summer for Texas families and enable Texas businesses to grow while generating more local and state tax revenues and creating more jobs.

### DISCUSSION POINTS:

- Describe how the loss of a full summer season has impacted your business/attraction/destination or community and what a full summer might mean to your entity and fellow constituents.
- Share a story or anecdotal information from your area that highlights the impact of a reduced summer season on you and other constituents from your district.
- **Ask your Legislator to support a consistent and uniform public school calendar.**

(1) Dr. Paul von Hippel: <https://www.educationnext.org/busting-the-myths-about-year-round-school-calendars/>

(2) Data provided by Dr. Ray Perryman

**Contacts:** Erika Boyd, President & CEO, Texas Travel Alliance – Ph: 512-328-8842 | Ron Hinkle – Ph: 512-567-5250 | Cheri Huddleston – Ph: 512-750-8502