



## Support for Senate Bill 980

Good morning Chairman Carona and members of the Senate Business and Commerce Committee.

My name is Robert Howden, the head of Texans for Economic Progress and I am here to testify in support of SB 980. Texans for Economic Progress is an Austin based, non-profit advocacy group that monitors the competitive process in key sectors of the Texas economy.

Technology moves fast. If you blink, you can get left in the dust.

In Texas, we have a strong track record of leading the curve and embracing public policy that paves the way for innovations in technology and expanded consumer choices.

This Session, through Senate Bill 980, Texas has another opportunity to lead by saying "so long" to lingering regulatory relics of the past, making room for even more investment, choices and economic opportunity.

Old school rules can stand in the way of the latest technology investment and innovation – and as a result can slow down job creation and economic development.

If outdated rules make it a hassle to invest in Texas, investment can go elsewhere were the regulatory barriers aren't as intense and are focused on the future.

Many of the remaining outdated communications rules were established when Texans only had a single choice for communications technology:

The good ol' rotary phone rules from that era probably even smell musty. If we updated our communications regulations, we could eliminate cumbersome paperwork and filing requirements that aren't even necessary anymore.

We could streamline government oversight so that it reflects the realities of today's communications industry. We could let the market continue to hum along, setting prices, encouraging competition and demanding high quality customer service. Imagine the consumer benefits in a world where the rules governing the marketplace reflect the reality of how people actually communicate today.

Hopefully, this year through SB 980, we'll bid farewell to rules designed for a monopoly-era and store them away with the other dusty relics of the past. Please vote for Senator Carona's SB 980.

Robert S. Howden