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Senate Bill 2 Passed 21-9 to Offer a Billion Dollars of Property Tax Reform for All Texas Taxpayers
1st change in "Rollback Rate" in 38 years from 8% down to 3.5%, so property tax bill hikes slow down too!
As JFK said, "victory has a 1000 fathers, while defeat is an orphan"

Austin – In a major victory for Texas taxpayers, Senate Bill 2, the Texas Property Tax Reform and Transparency Act of 2019, was passed out of the senate with bipartisan support in a 21-9 vote with Senator Eddie Lucio (D-Brownsville) and Senator Juan "Chuy" Hinojosa (D-McAllen) joining the 19 Republicans. The legislation was authored by Senator Paul Bettencourt (R-Houston), Chairman of the Senate Committee on Property Tax. The SB2 conference committee report ably chaired by Senator Hancock (R- North Richland Hills) from the Senate and Representative Burrows (R-Lubbock) from the House. The legislation provides the first change in the rollback rate in 38 years by lowering it from 8% to 3.5% for Cities and Counties. This means as appraised values go up, property tax rates must come down. Senate Bill 2 has an estimated \$930 million dollars of taxpayer savings in fiscal year 2024 alone, and is part of a larger package of reform legislation, HB3, that includes an additional \$5 billion for property tax relief, but also major changes to the Texas school finance system.

"This is a journey that I started on with Lt. Governor Dan Patrick, and 300 other taxpayers when we came to the Texas Capitol in 2003 as constituents to ask for property relief," said Senator Bettencourt. **"It's the first major property tax reform in nearly four decades, and that says it all!"** he remarked. **"As JFK said, 'victory has a 1000 fathers, while defeat is an orphan,'** he quipped. (But it is a serious win for 7 million Texas taxpayers)

An important milestone occurred when Governor Abbott set a lower rollback number, 2.5% in early 2018, lower than either the Senate or the House did in 2017, and Lt Governor Patrick's (R-Texas) insistence that the Senate blocker bills be moved, if necessary, to have a full vote by the Senate on SB 2, which was passed then by a vote of 18-13. Speaker Bonnen also showed his resolve consistently to get meaningful property tax reform and relief passed during this session.

The SB 2 Conference Committee chaired by Senator Hancock, and members Senator Bettencourt, Creighton, Perry, Hinojosa reviewed and approved the final SB 2 draft before the report was taken up by the full Texas Senate. It was passed by a vote of 21-9. The SB2 conference committee report calls for automatic elections for many jurisdictions that would exceed the new lower limits. It also includes substantial additional transparency and appraisal reforms.

"I want to thank Senators Creighton, Perry, Lucio and Hancock for their work and for being a part of the original Senate Property Tax Committee Tour, where we toured the State in 2016 to hear from countless taxpayers on the impact of rising property tax bills," continued Senator Bettencourt. **"Every regular citizen we heard from around the State, spoke clearly of the need for property tax relief at our last public hearing,"** he added.

In Dallas, the average property tax bill now exceeds \$5,000 and Houston is right behind them. Throughout the State home and business owners were being crushed by property taxes which can grow 2 to 3 times faster than their income rise.

"This is not a partisan issue because it is an everybody pays issue. This reform keeps the dream of home and business ownership alive not just for the Texans who are but also the Texans that are yet to be," concluded Senator Bettencourt. SB2 had a concurrent 88-50 vote in the House tonight and is on the way to Governor Abbotts' signature next.

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