

## BILLBOARD FACTS

- In Texas there are more than 30,000 billboards. Approximately 550 new permits are granted each year by TxDOT. Nationwide, there are more than 500,000 billboards lining our highways, and 5,000–15,000 new billboards are added annually.
- Prohibiting new billboards does not hurt business. More than 1,000 communities and five states across the nation prohibit new billboards. In fact, many cities experienced an increase in tourism spending after enacting tough billboard restrictions. For instance—Vermont experienced a 50 percent rise in tourism spending in the first two years it became billboard free.<sup>1</sup>
- Revenue from the billboard industry generates less than 1 percent of total advertising revenue.
- Nationwide, the billboard industry employs fewer than 15,000 and in Texas, that number is less than 1,500 people.
- Billboard prohibition is legal.
- Texas courts and courts across the nation have held that billboards may be prohibited or regulated principally because they gain their value from the proximity to taxpayer-funded roads and are, fundamentally, a use of the public right-of-way.

*“They take up space and may obstruct views, distract motorists, displace alternate uses of land and pose other problems that legitimately call for regulation.”*

—From a 1994 opinion by the U.S. Supreme Court in  
*City of Ladue v. Gilleo* (114 S. Ct. 2038).

The billboard industry is an economic drain in Texas. Billboard companies pay:

- No sales taxes on their advertising revenue
- Very few property taxes
- Nothing for construction, maintenance, or operations of our highways
- No highway user fees

Billboard companies demand:

- Use without compensation, of our highway system for their benefit
- Huge sums of money when a highway project requires a sign’s removal or relocation
- Billboard regulatory legislation is consistent with private property rights because it protects existing billboards.

The concept of no new billboards has grassroots and business support:

- 79% of Texans agree that there should be no more billboards on Texas highways.  
(Study conducted by Stephen Klineberg, PhD., Rice University Texas Environmental Survey)
- Nearly 200 Texas cities have adopted billboard ordinances.
- These 200 cities span Texas, from Flower Mound, Hondo, Frisco and Manvel to Dallas, Houston, Austin and Fort Worth.

Bipartisan endorsements

- More than 200 adopt-a-highway group endorsements
- More than 20 city endorsements including Houston, Dallas and Fort Worth
- Greater Houston Partnership endorsement
- Community and regional mobility group endorsements

<sup>1</sup> Source “Billboards by the Numbers.” 2000. Scenic America.