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December 6, 2022

Sunset Commission
105 E 15th Street
Austin, TX 78701

Texas Sports Tourism Coalition Written Testimony for 12/6 Texas Sunset Advisory Commission Hearing on the Texas Economic Development and Tourism Office

Dear Chairman Schwertner, Vice Chair Holland and Members of the Sunset Advisory Commission,

The Texas Sports Tourism Coalition was formed in 2020 during a tumultuous time for our industry due to the global pandemic. We found so much benefit from meeting regularly to discuss relevant topics, which in turn helped advance the sports tourism industry in the State of Texas, that we have continued our engagement and are stronger than ever. We have also successfully pooled our resources together to create joint sales and marketing initiatives that allow us to have a bigger Texas presence at national conventions. To date, our Coalition has over 50 members representing the following destinations/organizations:

Abilene	Dallas	Irving	San Antonio
Amarillo	El Paso	Lubbock	San Marco
Arlington	Farmers Branch	McAllen	Shenandoah
Austin	Fort Worth	Nacogdoches	Temple
Brownwood	Frisco	Odessa	Texas Hotel & Lodging
Bryan	Garland	Paris	Association
Cedar Hill	Glen Rose	Pearland	The Colony
College Station	Grapevine	Plano	Tyler
Corpus Christi	Houston	Round Rock	Waco

Please accept this letter as our support of the ETF (Event Trust Fund) and MERP (Major Events Reimbursement Program) from every destination listed above. Each destination listed has a sports tourism focus and an active participation in our Coalition. No matter what size population or the type of sporting events we all host, unanimously, we agree that the above-mentioned reimbursement programs have been a huge success in helping our destinations attract and host sporting events. These events bring large amounts of tax dollars and positive economic impact to the State and each of our respective cities. Most other states have tried to duplicate the Texas model without much success, which is why our cities collectively host more sporting events than any others in the country. Our clients say it best:

"The Amateur Athletic Union (AAU) is one of the largest, non-profit, volunteer sports organizations in the country. With over 720,000 members and 45 sports programs, the AAU hosts events of all sizes and scales year-round across the country. Having frequented Texas with their flagship event, the AAU Junior Olympic Games, amongst other AAU programming, we are familiar with and would like to recognize the



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immense value that the Texas Events Trust Fund provides our host communities." – Paul Campbell, Chairman, Amateur Athletic Union Junior Olympic Games

"The Bassmaster Classic is a true celebration of sportfishing. It's a thrilling opportunity to promote the designated city and state of Texas along with its great outdoor resources to the 140,000+ fans who attend Classic Week events and millions more across the country watching live on the FOX Sports platforms. We have hosted this event in the state a few times already and are eager to return in the future. While there is no doubt a host of fans reside in Texas, tens of thousands of others come from all over the country, as we have seen more than 37 states represented! An event of this magnitude isn't possible without the partnership of cities that have hosted us, and the invaluable support received via the Event Trust Fund to attract events such as the Classic." – Eric Lopez, Director of Event Operations for B.A.S.S.

"The College Football Playoff (CFP) is a postseason event to determine college football's national champion on the field while also creating one-of-a-kind opportunities for economic impact, community engagement, and legacy programming within our host communities. The legwork, guidance, and financial support provided by host cities are paramount to the event's success and the positive effects resulting from our philanthropic initiatives. The Texas Events Trust Fund provides a strategic benefit to Texas host committees when attracting, planning, and executing the College Football Playoff National Championship." – Bill Hancock, Executive Director, College Football Playoff

"With billions of fans globally, soccer is the world's most popular sport. Soccer United Marketing (SUM) has the privilege of bringing the most talented teams and players to the U.S. to compete in marquee tournaments and tours such as Concacaf Gold Cup, the Mexican National Team U.S. Tour, and Leagues Cup. We have hosted some of our largest and most successful events in Texas and remain eager to return to the state in the future. The strong partnerships with host communities and the financial support available through the Texas Events Trust Fund are invaluable when placing and hosting events of this magnitude. It truly differentiates the state of Texas from other host locations." – Christoph Schoenbeck, Senior Director Event Business, Soccer United Marketing

We'd like to publicly thank the Governor's office of Economic Development for working so closely and diligently with our cities to ensure a smooth administration of the ETF and MERP applications. They have been efficient and done a good job with the oversight of the entire program.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Janis Burke". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Janis Burke, Chair
Texas Sports Tourism Coalition