

Comments of Richard Stockton, AECOM

TXDOT Sunset Commission

December 9, 2016

My name is Richard Stockton and I represent AECOM. Chairman Gonzales, Members of the Sunset Commission: thank you for the opportunity to appear today. On behalf of the over 2000 Texas based colleagues at AECOM it is my honor to come before you and speak in favor of your efforts.

My company, AECOM is a global infrastructure company and we are proud to have been doing business in Texas and working alongside TXDOT for more than 50 years. Mr. Chairman, we have over 600 employees based in Austin alone, and a number of them - including myself - call Round Rock home.

The voters have given their enthusiastic support for improving Texas roads in a timely manner and the suggestions contained in your report will help to make that happen. You are to be commended for all your hard work.

You have received comments from a number of qualified groups and individuals with whom we are in agreement. In particular, the American Council of Engineering Companies has spoken in support of the recommendations on Project Delivery and the recommendations of 2.1, 2.2 and 2.3. We agree with the development of accountable, performance based measures of execution and a defined work plan will improve efficiency and deliver projects faster.

Additionally, we encourage the legislature to enable TXDOT to continue evaluating all avenues of project delivery types - including design build - so that they can successfully address the volume of work that they expect and Texas needs. It will take effective day-to-day project management, plus planning and implementation of large, impactful urban transformation projects to best use the money allocated to them by the voters.

We concur with the ACEC on the issue of Support for the Districts as well, and encourage an evaluation of the resources necessary to assist in performing their duties and ultimately delivering to the voters what is expected.

*Richard Stockton, AECOM, December 9, 2016, con't.*

Regarding the matter of contract oversight and the challenge of employment restrictions, we agree with the ACEC that there have been unintended consequences as a result of revisions to Chapter 572 of the Government Code. Last session, SB20 amended Chapter 572 to provide that a state agency employee who participates in a procurement or contract negotiation may not accept employment from any of the firms he or she reviews for two years after leaving state agency employment. The new rule is having a negative impact on procurement within TXDOT and is leading to delays in getting projects on the ground. The ACEC provided a good example in their public comments: *"As an example, any large professional services procurement within TxDOT might have 50 responses, with 4-5 firms on each team. So in effect, anyone who works on the selection process for several of these automatically removes him or herself from being employed by hundreds of firms, even if they work for TxDOT another ten years and never work on another procurement."*

The adoption of a new recommendation under Issue 3, excluding TXDOT from the provisions of Chapter 572 may encourage the reengagement of Texas' most seasoned professionals at TXDOT in the procurement process, thereby training the next generation of TXDOT professionals and expediting the delivery of projects.

Like other large employers in the state of Texas we have experience on the ground assisting in the design and execution of these vital transportation projects. We stand willing and ready to be a resource to the Committee and to TXDOT as you work to implement the will of the voters and keep Texas moving.

Thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today.