



PO Box 1988  
Grapevine, TX 76099

**Office**  
4500 State Hwy 360  
Grapevine, TX 76051

**Local**  
817.552.2500

**Toll Free**  
877.953.7282

**Email**  
[sbtexas@sbtexas.com](mailto:sbtexas@sbtexas.com)

**Website**  
[sbtexas.com](http://sbtexas.com)

Dear Texas Legislator,

On behalf of the over 2,800 churches affiliated with the Southern Baptists of Texas Convention (SBTC), the Texas Ethics & Religious Liberty Committee (TERLC) engages in public policy every legislative session to mobilize churches toward active involvement.

We believe all citizens have a right and responsibility to participate in local, state, and national elections and pray for their elected officials. Every Christian should seek to influence industry, government, and society with righteousness, truth, and brotherly love, which are needed now more than ever.

As a committee, we ask you to include the following legislative priorities for the 89th Legislative Session:

### **I. RELIGIOUS LIBERTY**

The SBTC advocates for laws protecting Religious Liberty, which our nation's founders viewed as a basic human right essential to a free society. Our state and local governments must resist and defeat any legislation that is hostile toward and discriminates against the free exercise to practice their religious convictions in public places.

### **II. SANCTITY OF LIFE**

The SBTC advocates for laws that acknowledge the sanctity of all human life. Our state and local governments must ensure that legislation respects all human life from conception to natural death—the unborn, born, young, old, ill, disabled, and mentally and/or physically impaired—each deserving equal protection, full dignity, and rights as a human being made in the image of God.

### **III. ORPHAN CARE**

The SBTC advocates for laws that promote adopting and fostering children. Our state and local governments must enact legislation that assists and incentivizes adoption, as well as encourage more faith-based programs for children in foster care.

### **IV. GENDER IDENTITY**

The SBTC advocates for laws recognizing the unalterable God-given distinctions between males and females. Our state and local government must ensure that legislation respects the unique distinctions between males and females, protects children under the age of 18 from the promotion of sexual and gender identity confusion, and prohibits public funds from being allocated to further legislation or programs contrary to these unalterable God-given distinctions.

### **V. MARRIAGE, FAMILY, AND PARENTAL RIGHTS**

The SBTC advocates for laws that affirm and protect the biblical and traditional views of marriage and family, recognizing marriage as a sacred union between one man and one woman and acknowledging that children, guided by the God-given authority of faithful and loving mothers and fathers, are the foundation of a healthy society.

We encourage the state and local governments to partner with, not act contrary to, the family unit, enacting legislation that protects and upholds marriage as defined by God and parental rights, ensuring that parents have the freedom to make decisions regarding the upbringing, education, and healthcare of their children without undue interference, recognizing that parents are the primary arbiters of a child's moral and spiritual formation.

## **VI. EXPLOITATION AND VIOLENCE**

The SBTC advocates for laws that deter violence, render justice, defend the weak, and deliver the abused from their oppressors. Our state and local governments must ensure legislation restricts all forms of violence, abuse, pornography, sex trafficking, and drug activity and protect our borders from propagating such illegal crimes.

## **VII. ECONOMIC PRINCIPLES AND GAMBLING**

The SBTC advocates for laws that protect our citizens from undue financial hardships that needlessly burden marriages, businesses, and families. Our state and local governments must ensure legislation promotes fiscal responsibility, prohibits public funds from being allocated to further policies that violate biblical principles, restricts oppressive regulations and high tax rates, and prevents all forms of state-sanctioned predatory gambling.

Thank you for your service to the great state of Texas. We commit to pray for you and the entire 89th Legislature as you seek the wisdom of God in the promotion of what is good and the uncompromising restriction of what is evil.

We will continue to communicate throughout the 89th Legislative Session. Please feel free to contact us for further discussion and prayer.

God Bless You,

**Lee Peoples**, TERLC Chairman

**Cindy Asmussen**, SBTC Public Policy Advisor

**Joe Lightner**, SBTC Associate Executive Director