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# TXOGA Announces Priorities for 85th Legislature

## **TXOGA Announces Priorities for 85<sup>th</sup> Legislature Railroad Commission Sunset, Taxes and Infrastructure Top List**

AUSTIN – The Texas Oil & Gas Association (TXOGA) today announced its priorities for the 85<sup>th</sup> Texas Legislature, which include the sunset review of the Railroad Commission of Texas and issues related to taxes and critical infrastructure.

“As we ease out of the dramatic downturn in oil and natural gas prices, lawmakers should keep Texas on the right track by reauthorizing the Railroad Commission, maintaining their commitment to stable, science-based regulations, preserving a low tax

environment and encouraging the critical infrastructure development that our growing state needs,” said Todd Staples, president of TXOGA.

“Texas’ chart-topping accolades are no accident. Texas leads the nation in oil and natural gas production, pipeline miles and refining capacity because of pro-investment policies that protect the environment, while creating jobs and energy security,” said Staples. “This legislative session, we are urging our lawmakers to hold fast to the policies that have attracted unprecedented oil and natural gas investments here, securing our economy, our environment and our future.”

On the Railroad Commission sunset, Staples noted pitfalls that can threaten passage of legislation. “One of our top priorities is for the legislature to pass a sunset bill for the Railroad Commission of Texas that reflects our state’s commitment to science-based regulations,” said Staples. “Too often, sunset bills become magnets for proposals designed to slow or stop oil and natural gas development and have nothing to do with the function of the agency. The Texas oil and natural gas industry welcomes robust oversight by the experts at the Railroad Commission and we encourage lawmakers to preserve and properly fund this critical agency.”

Maintaining a low tax environment, infrastructure investment and job growth are among TXOGA’s other priorities this session. Staples noted that the oil and natural gas industry directly employs hundreds of thousands of Texans and paid \$13.8 billion in state and local taxes and state royalties in fiscal year 2015, revenue that is used to fund schools, roads and essential public services. “The Texas economy and state and local budgets do well when the oil and natural gas sector is investing and creating jobs,” he said. “This session we will be encouraging lawmakers to look closely at policies that make Texas a great place to do business and to stay the course. Sound regulation, competitive tax policy and infrastructure have been and will continue to be the keys to continued success in Texas.”

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