

**For Immediate Release
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CENTRAL TEXAS INTERFAITH STATEMENT ON TEXAS SENATE PASSAGE OF HB5 CTI Commends Sen Eckhardt for strong questions on floor

A coalition of Democrats and Republicans could easily have voted down HB5, putting the failed Chapter 313 in its grave once and for all. Unfortunately, a majority from both parties decided to revive a program that currently costs taxpayers \$31 Billion/year, money which could be going to public schools. They had their chance. They voted to continue to support subsidizing corporate welfare on the backs of schoolchildren and taxpayers. We believe that a strong economic development strategy is the result of investments in education, workforce, and strong communities. Studies show that only roughly 10% of companies locate to an area because of tax giveaways.

That being said, it is clear that two years of intense opposition to the reauthorization of Chapter 313 led by Central Texas Interfaith, the Texas IAF and allies forced reforms to the Senate version of HB5, including elimination of kickbacks to schools, multiple levels of approval, a stricter determining factor requirement, and increased job creation requirements. These reforms were all meant to respond to our criticisms of the program. We commend the Senators who voted against this failed program, and especially Central Texas Senator Sarah Eckhardt for her tough questioning on the floor about this bill. We look forward to seeing what the Speaker and House think of this version of the bill.

Central Texas Interfaith is a non-partisan, multi-ethnic, multi-issue coalition of 50 religious congregations, schools, unions, and civil organizations who work together to address public issues that affect the well being of families and neighborhoods in our community. <https://www.austininterfaith.org>