

**Public Testimony  
HB 131  
Texas House Public Education Committee  
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**Submitted by:  
Greg Vaughn  
Executive Director  
Texas Association of Workforce Boards  
P.O. Box 703278  
Dallas, Texas 75370  
[greg.vaughn@tawb.org](mailto:greg.vaughn@tawb.org)  
(214) 620-9165**

The Texas Association of Workforce Boards (TAWB) respectfully submits the following testimony ON **HB 131** to the House Public Education Committee.

TAWB represents the 28 local workforce development boards in Texas and the more than 700 business and community leaders across Texas who serve as volunteers on those boards. The 28 Local Workforce Development Boards in Texas direct federal, state, and local funding to workforce development programs. They are where “the rubber hits the road” when it comes to workforce development in their respective regions, with key functions including Employer Engagement, Workforce Stakeholder Partnerships, Career Pathways Development and Coordination with Education & Training Providers.

The individuals from the local workforce boards who participate in TAWB include both the professional staff that administer the boards’ activities, as well as local workforce board members from the area business community. These individuals are the ones on the front lines in Texas when it comes to aligning the needs of Texas employers with education and workforce training initiatives.

TAWB makes recommendations on workforce development, education and training from the employer’s perspective, in order to ensure a future workforce that will be ready to meet the needs of employers and grow the state’s economy. Several years ago, TAWB published an Education Paper, “[\*\*\*The Workforce in Texas: Aligning Education to Meet the Needs of Texas Employers.\*\*\*](#)” A prominent recommendation of that Paper was the implementation of a Pre-K to Careers Model and a Business Driven Education System to improve our education system and to further align education with employer needs. Key components of this Pre-K to Careers Model and Business Driven Education System include providing students from kindergarten through middle school and beyond with information and opportunities about career paths such as:

- Providing job-shadowing opportunities to enable students to explore career opportunities in the workplace

- Mentoring students in career pathways, and
- Providing opportunities for students to visit worksites

TAWB believes the provisions of HB 131 to allow a school district to excuse a student from attending school for a career investigation day to visit a professional at the professional's workplace during the student's junior and senior years of high school for the purpose of determining the student's interest in pursuing a career in the professional's field are aligned with our previous recommendations.

We wish to thank the members of the House Public Education for this opportunity to share information we trust will be helpful to you in your deliberations. TAWB stands ready to provide additional information during the 88<sup>th</sup> Texas Legislature.