



TEXAS HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES & TEXAS SENATE

June 18, 2026

Dear Chair Kinsey and Members of the State Board of Education,

As members of the Texas Legislature, we write to express our serious concern regarding the integrity of the State Board of Education's ongoing overhaul of the state's public school social studies standards and the adoption of a mandatory literary works list under House Bill 1605. Both processes are advancing toward a final vote in June 2026, and both have been compromised in ways that warrant immediate attention before that vote is taken.

I. Conflict of Interest: The Process Has Been Compromised

Federal tax filings confirm that the social studies content advisor Dr. Donald Frazier (through his organization, Texas Center at Schreiner University) received a \$70,000 grant from the Texas Public Policy Foundation (TPPF) specifically designated for the development of social studies TEKS. That financial arrangement was not disclosed to the full board before or during the revision process. A second content advisor, Dr. Robert Koons, serves as a senior fellow at the same organization. TPPF, the grantor, is an organization that actively advocates for school vouchers, particular curriculum content, and related education policy positions in Texas.

This is not a partisan observation. It is a basic standard of public integrity. When individuals entrusted with writing the educational standards for 5.5 million Texas public school students hold undisclosed financial relationships with an organization whose own representatives have publicly claimed ownership of the resulting framework, the legitimacy of the process is called into question. The Board's refusal to allow questions about this arrangement during the April 2026 meeting, and the absence of any stated timeline for addressing it, compound the concern.

We call on the Board to pause any further votes, hearings, or advancement of the social studies TEKS until this conflict of interest has been fully and publicly investigated and resolved.

II. Accuracy and Statutory Compliance: The Standards Contain Significant Gaps

Separate from the conflict of interest, the substance of the proposed social studies TEKS raises serious questions about factual accuracy and compliance with Texas law.

The revised standards, as drafted, remove documented historical contributions of Muslim scholars to mathematics and astronomy, including figures such as Al-Khwarizmi, whose foundational work gave us algebra and the conceptual basis of modern computing, and Al-Battani, whose astronomical calculations remain embedded in modern trigonometry. These are not matters of ideology or perspective. They are widely accepted and verified parts of the historical record. At the same time, the proposed standards frame Islam almost exclusively through conflict and conquest, including the use of the historically inaccurate term “Islamic slave trade,” while omitting the broader historical context that would allow students to understand Islam as a civilization with documented contributions to human knowledge.

The proposed standards also introduce claims about pre-Columbian Aztec civilization that are not broadly agreed upon by historians, raising further questions about the factual rigor of the revision process as a whole. Omitting verified historical contributions while introducing contested claims does not make the standards more rigorous. It makes it less accurate. Texas Education Code Section 28.002 requires that TEKS standards be rigorous and reflect current topics and up-to-date research. Standards that do not meet that bar should not advance to a final vote.

The American Historical Association, which was incorporated by Congress in 1889 and monitors state-level academic frameworks as part of its institutional mission, has described the new approach as experimental and untested, noting that it dramatically alters what Texas students will learn. The Association also raised concern that the revised K-8 course sequence eliminates five existing courses, including two years of Texas history (Grades 4 and 7), two years of U.S. history (Grades 5 and 8), and World Cultures (Grade 6), and substantially reduces coverage of world history, geography, civics, and government, all of which Texas law requires to be included in social studies instruction.

Further, the Texas Education Agency has not produced a single crosswalk or vertical alignment document, that is, a side-by-side comparison showing what content is being added, removed, or reorganized in the transition from the current TEKS to the proposed standards. This omission leaves the Board, the Legislature, and the public without the tools to evaluate whether the revised standards satisfy the statutory requirements under Texas Education Code Sections 28.002 and 28.025, including the state's College and Career Readiness Standards for Social Studies.

Foundational civic concepts already embedded in current TEKS, including First Amendment rights, due process, judicial review, and media literacy, are absent or significantly diminished in the proposed draft. These are not optional. Texas law requires their inclusion.

III. The Required Literary Works List: Representation and Scope

Under House Bill 1605, the SBOE is adopting Texas's first mandatory K-12 reading list. The Board gave preliminary approval to approximately 200 required literary works in April 2026, with a final vote expected in June. We raise four major concerns about this list.

First, in terms of the process, communications from SBOE members indicate that the literary works list was drafted not by the Board itself, but by TEA Commissioner Mike Morath, who used TEA staff to prepare the list and then personally met with individual board members to advocate for its adoption. According to these communications, the Commissioner subsequently sought legislative pressure on the Board to pass the list, accompanied by threats to disband the elected Board if members refused to comply. If the Board is being coerced into adopting a list it did not

independently author, that raises fundamental questions about the integrity of this process and the independence of the elected Board from executive branch interference.

Second, House Bill 1605 required one literary work per grade level. The Board is now mandating lists of up to 20 works per grade, consuming an estimated 70 to 80 percent of English Language Arts instructional time annually. This expansion far exceeds the legislative mandate, strips local school districts of meaningful control over their own curricula, and leaves classroom teachers with little room to respond to student needs or exercise professional judgment.

Further, the proposed list includes more than a dozen passages from religious texts, all drawn from the Christian and Hebrew Bible, with no representation from other faith traditions. The 15 Bible stories and 12 Bible passages selected rely almost exclusively on Evangelical Protestant translations, reflecting a clear denominational preference.

Beyond the religious texts concern, the list also significantly underrepresents the contributions of Hispanic and Black authors, a serious gap in a state where 54 percent of public school students are Hispanic. The current College and Career Readiness Standards for English Language Arts explicitly require students to read and analyze texts from a variety of cultural and historical contexts, including American, British, and world literatures, and to acquire insights about the world from diverse texts. A reading list drawn exclusively from one faith tradition, with significant gaps in cultural representation, does not satisfy those requirements.

IV. Records Request

In our capacity as members of the Texas Legislature and in accordance with the Texas Public Information Act (Texas Government Code, Chapter 552), this letter is accompanied by a formal public records request, attached hereto as Exhibit A. We request timely access to the records described in that attachment, and we expect that any withheld information will be accompanied by a specific statutory exception cited for each redaction.

Conclusion

The students, families, and taxpayers of Texas deserve social studies standards and a required reading list developed through a transparent, factually grounded process free from undisclosed financial conflicts. Texans will bear the significant implementation costs these revised standards impose on school districts, and they deserve to know that those standards were developed with integrity.

We urge the Board to pause the current proceedings, conduct a full and public investigation of the conflict of interest identified above, and address the statutory and accuracy concerns raised in this letter before any final vote is taken in June.

We look forward to your prompt response.

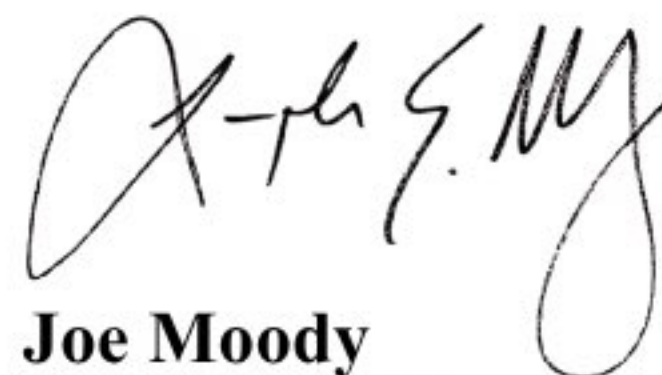
Sincerely,



Salman Bhojani
Texas State Representative
House District 92



Gene Wu
Texas State Representative
House District 137



Joe Moody
Speaker Pro Tempore
House District 78

Royce West
Texas State Senator
Senate District 23

Molly Cook
Texas State Senator
Senate District 15

Sarah Eckhardt
Texas State Senator
Senate District 14

Ron Reynolds
Texas State Representative
House District 27

John Bryant
Texas State Representative
House District 114

Alma A. Allen
Texas State Representative
House District 131

Christina Morales
Texas State Representative
House District 145

Elizabeth Campos
Texas State Representative
House District 119

Mihaela Plesa
Texas State Representative
House District 70

Terry Meza
Texas State Representative
House District 105

Erin Ziener
Texas State Representative
House District 45

Ana-Maria Rodriguez Ramos
Texas State Representative
House District 102

Donna Howard
Texas State Representative
House District 48

Suleman Lalani
Texas State Representative
House District 76

Chris Turner
Texas State Representative
House District 101

Rafael Anchia
Texas State Representative
House District 103

Diego Bernal
Texas State Representative
House District 123

Hubert Vo
Texas State Representative
House District 149

Lauren Ashley Simmons
Texas State Representative
House District 146

Cassandra Garcia Hernandez
Texas State Representative
House District 115

Jon Rosenthal
Texas State Representative
House District 135

Nicole Collier
Texas State Representative
House District 95

Armando Walle
Texas State Representative
House District 140

Vincent Perez
Texas State Representative
House District 77

Lulu Flores
Texas State Representative
House District 51

Ray Lopez
Texas State Representative
House District 125

Ana Hernandez
Texas State Representative
House District 143

Jessica Gonzalez
Texas State Representative
House District 104

Eddie Morales
Texas State Representative
House District 74

Aicha Davis
Texas State Representative
House District 109



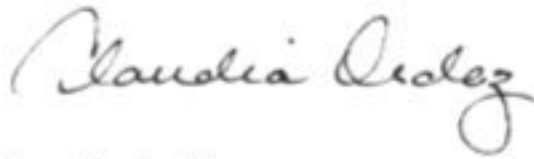
Mary Ann Perez
Texas State Representative
House District 144



Sheryl Cole
Texas State Representative
House District 46



Charlene Ward Johnson
Texas State Representative
House District 139



Claudia Ordaz
Texas State Representative
House District 79



Linda Garcia
Texas State Representative
House District 107



Ramon Romero Jr.
Texas State Representative
House District 90



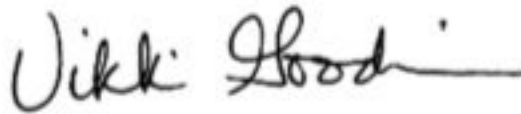
Barbara Gervin-Hawkins
Texas State Representative
House District 120



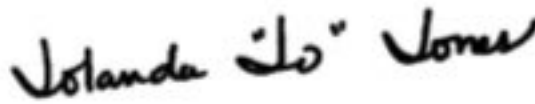
Oscar Longoria
Texas State Representative
House District 35



Rhetta Bowers
Texas State Representative
House District 113



Vikki Goodwin
Texas State Representative
House District 47



Jolanda Jones
Texas State Representative
House District 147



Erin Gamez
Texas State Representative
House District 38



Josey Garcia
Texas State Representative
House District 124