



Conclusion

To ensure the continued success of the Texas economy, the entire state and its communities will need to confront the challenges of an increasing and changing population. Texans will have rising demands for water, energy and transportation. These needs must be met, and balanced with challenges of the environment. Texans also will face the increasing costs of health care for businesses, families and the uninsured and the need for a capable, educated work force.

Texas' rapidly growing population presents not only challenges, but also opportunities for the state. An increasing population means increased opportunities for economic growth and development. Already, Texas has the second-largest economy of any state, behind California, and it is poised to grow in the future.

Texas is a vast and diverse state, with numerous economic bases, strengths and vulnerabilities. As community, business and local government leaders address these issues, the Comptroller's office stands ready to assist them in assuring that Texas continues to grow and prosper.

To assist in meeting the state's challenges and opportunities, the Comptroller will release a series of reports on Texas' 12 economic regions (**Exhibit 48**). These reports will be released starting in 2008.

While this report was designed to give local and statewide leaders detailed statistics and research for Texas as a whole, each of the 12 subsequent reports will focus on the issues directly affecting each region and its economy.

These reports will examine the regions' demographic characteristics, including population information and educational attainment level. As with this report, the regional reports will examine the major issues facing businesses and communities including, water, energy, transportation, health care and education, tailored to a regional level.

Each report also will summarize the region's most popular industries and occupations. Projecting forward, specific economic indicators for each region will be discussed identifying growth sectors and projecting future growth areas.

We hope that you will find these reports useful to further promote local economic development in your areas. We look forward to hearing your feedback and stand ready to assist local communities in any way we can. For assistance, please contact the Comptroller's Local Government Assistance and Economic Development Division at <http://www.window.state.tx.us/lga/> or (800) 531-5441 ext. 3-4679.

