Texas Historical Commission

About HB 1/SB 1 Budget Proposals

- THC reductions should be proportional
    - THC: 77 percent cut
    - Overall state budget: 17 percent cut
    - Article I (General Government agencies) average: 24 percent cut
    - THC should not be singled out for harsher treatment
- Allow Commission to work with budget committees on final reduction
    - We know THC budget must be reduced
    - Regardless of %, programs Texans value can be saved if cut distributed across agency
- THC provides a core function of government
    - Only agency tasked with saving & interpreting the history of Texas
    - Real danger resources critical to Texas history will be irretrievably lost
- THC is an expert agency
    - Professional historians, archeologists, architects, site managers, communicators
    - All THC programs are directed by law
- Programs targeted for elimination/suspension are economic engines
    - Heritage Trails tourism returns $7.50 in taxes for $1 in promotion
    - Courthouse restoration creates 5,800 jobs, almost $40 million in taxes
    - A mini stimulus plan for Texas, counties match 66% of state contribution
- These programs vital to small towns, rural Texas
    - Important to all areas, but heritage travelers lifeblood of small towns, less-populous counties
    - Rural Texas has no other tourism promotion program

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Overview of HB 1/SB 1 Impact on THC

- 77 percent reduction in overall budget
- 50+ percent reduction in base budget

  [salaries, office expense, travel, etc.]
- 34 percent reduction in employees
- Elimination of Texas Heritage Trails Program effective 12/31/2011

  [helps millions of travelers find historic places, urban & rural]
- No funding for Texas Historic Courthouse Preservation Program

  [insufficient funds to maintain previously restored buildings]
- Elimination of Texas Preservation Trust Fund 8/31/2011

  [sole source of state grants for historic preservation]
- Elimination of marketing communications division 8/31/2011

  [ends communication; closes website, public access portals]
- Shifts agency focus from programs directed by Texas law toward responsibilities under federal law