

AGENDA ITEM DETAILS

Subject: Stakeholder Connection: A Panel Discussion with ERS State Agency Member Employers

Background:

The Employees Retirement System of Texas (ERS) serves a wide variety of populations through the benefit programs offered to support the health, well-being and retirement needs for the state's workforce. The agency's mission statement serves as a guiding principle to those served by the agency:

"ERS OFFERS COMPETITIVE BENEFITS TO ENHANCE THE LIVES OF ITS MEMBERS."

Ensuring the benefits offered by the state and administered by ERS meet the needs of the people and entities ERS serves is of utmost importance. This reoccurring agenda item will provide the Board of Trustees with an opportunity to hear from different groups served by ERS. Trustees can get input about the value of the state's benefits, the effectiveness of the benefits for recruitment and retention, and how the agency can better support members and agencies across the state. Increasing interaction with stakeholders was identified as an area of improvement in a previous survey of the Board.

The panel for the March 20, 2024 meeting is composed of two agency executives, both with a long history as state employees and extensive experience in agency leadership roles.

Lisa Craven
Deputy Comptroller and Chief of Staff
Texas Comptroller of Public Accounts

Lisa Craven has nearly 35 years of state service, having worked in both the executive and legislative branches. She began her career as a tour guide at the State Capitol in 1986. She previously worked in the Texas House of Representatives and served as chief of staff for then-Senator Glen Hegar. She moved over to the Texas Comptroller of Public Accounts in January 2015 when Comptroller Hegar was elected. In October 2018 she was appointed deputy comptroller and chief of staff and serves as the agency's administrative head.

Ms. Craven has a Bachelor of Science degree in speech from the University of Texas at Austin. She serves as Comptroller Hegar's appointee to the State Water Implementation Fund's (SWIFT) advisory committee, on the executive committee for the National Association of State Chief Administrators, and as an advisory council member for the Annette Strauss Institute for Civic Life in the Moody College of Communication at University of Texas at Austin. She was recently honored with the 2022 Outstanding Women in Texas Government Award for outstanding leadership by Governor Greg Abbott's Commission for Women and the State Agency Council.

Ms. Craven and her husband, Eric, are the proud parents of two daughters.

Brian E. Francis
Interim Executive Director
Texas Department of Licensing and Regulation

Brian Francis is a vision-driven thought leader who understands the importance of authenticity in messaging and in actions. His strategic leadership style and accomplishments have garnered the praise of legislative leaders from both sides of the aisle, a diverse array of professional and industry stakeholders and most importantly, his most valued allies - his employees.

Mr. Francis currently oversees the Texas Department of Licensing and Regulation while the Texas Commission of Licensing and Regulation undertakes a search for a permanent executive director – a return engagement for him, as he served as executive director of TDLR from 2016 through early 2022.

After his retirement from TDLR, Francis served as the Acting Executive Director of the Texas Sunset Advisory Commission during much of 2023.

Mr. Francis combines the wisdom of his real-world experience with the knowledge gained from his MBA in Public Finance from St. Edwards University. Brian gained an international perspective through his participation in the Transformative Leadership Program offered by a partnership of the University of Adelaide, South Australia, and the LBJ School of Public Affairs at the University of Texas.

Mr. Francis earned a Bachelor of Business Administration from Texas State University (formerly Southwest Texas State University) with a major in Finance and a Master of Business Administration from St. Edward's University with a concentration in Financial Management. He is also a graduate of the Governor's Executive Development Program and the Transformative Leadership Program at the University of Texas LBJ School of Public Affairs and the University of Adelaide in South Australia.

This agenda item is for informational purposes only.

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Slides – Stakeholder Connection