

**Chairman**  
J.D. Salinas III  
AT&T

**Vice Chairman**  
Commissioner Richard Cortez  
City of McAllen

**Treasurer**  
Eddie Aldrete  
IBC Bank

**Chairman Elect**  
Mayor Pete Saenz  
City of Laredo

**Executive Committee**  
Mayor Robert Garza  
City of Del Rio

Mayor Ramsey English Cantu  
City of Eagle Pass

Mayor Joe "Fito" Salinas  
City of La Joya

Mayor Jim Darling  
City of McAllen

Mayor Ambrosio Hernandez  
City of Pharr

Director Fred Brouwen  
Pharr-Reynosa Intl Bridge

Mayor J J Zamora  
City of Port Isabel

Mayor Roberto Salinas  
City of Roma

Ben Petty, Sr.  
TaxFree Shopping

Judge Aurelio Guerra  
Willacy County

Judge Joe Rathmell  
Zapata County

**Committee Chairs**  
Carolyn Petty  
Alex Meade  
Economic Development

Olga Gabriel  
Healthcare

Monica Weisberg-Stewart  
Immigration &  
Border Security

Sergio Contreras  
Transportation

Blas Castaneda  
Workforce Development

**Mission:**

**To make legislative recommendations to help the Texas Border Region grow and prosper economically.**



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**TBC: Don't Ignore Common Sense Border Security Alternatives**

McAllen, Texas (Jan. 25, 2017) – J.D. Salinas, III, former Hidalgo County judge and chairman of the Texas Border Coalition (TBC), today issued the following statement in response to President Donald Trump's executive actions authorizing construction of a border wall:

*"During the campaign, President Donald Trump repeatedly vowed to implement new border protection and law enforcement activities along the U.S-Mexico border, including construction of a border wall. So, today's executive actions should come as no surprise.*

*"TBC has long maintained that we cannot rely on outmoded strategies and tactics to halt the illegal entry of people, weapons, drugs and contraband into the U.S. We recommend a strategic investment at the border itself, attacking the cartels in cooperation with the Mexican government before their smuggling operation crosses the border, preventing them from crossing between the ports of entry.*

*"In Texas, we suggest taking advantage of the Rio Grande River by moving Border Patrol up to and onto the water. The Border Patrol maritime force is highly successful at preventing illegal river crossings when they have boats on the river. We recommend putting more boats and agents on the river.*

*"On the ground, we suggest eradicating the Salt Cedar and Carrizo Cane on the riverbanks that obscures sightlines and hides criminal activity. In addition, all-weather roads are needed to provide Border Patrol agents access to the river.*

*"At the ports of entry, we support S. 458 (114<sup>th</sup> Congress) authored by U.S. Sen. John Cornyn to improve the infrastructure, technology and communications used by Customs agents to stop drug trafficking and facilitate legitimate trade and travel. It would also increase the Customs force 5,000 agents. Any increase in staffing must be accompanied by management reforms that slash overtime and better balance the number of supervisors with frontline employees.*

*"Finally, securing the border requires hiring enough judges to process the thousands of families and unaccompanied minors who surrender to Border Patrol and Customs officials seeking asylum. The current backlog of more than half-a-million cases demands Congress double the number of immigration judges to 524.*

*"TBC looks forward to working with local community leaders, elected officials in Austin and Washington and the new Trump Administration where we can to develop smart, effective*

*border policies that keep terrorists, illegal border crossers and drugs out of the country, and expedite people and goods across the border.”*

###

**About the Texas Border Coalition**

The Texas Border Coalition (TBC) is a collective voice of border mayors, county judges, economic development commissions focused on issues that affect 2.5 million people along the Texas-Mexico border region and economically disadvantaged counties from El Paso to Brownsville. TBC is working closely with the state and federal government to educate, advocate, and secure funding for transportation, immigration and border security, workforce development, economic development and health care. For more information, visit the coalition website at [www.texasbordercoalition.org](http://www.texasbordercoalition.org). Follow TBC on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#) [#TXBorderCoalition] to keep up to date on all of the latest news about the coalition and its activities.