



Support Amending the Plank on Free Market for Utilities and Insurance

Insurance Deregulation All insurance should operate in a free market within Texas and between Texas and other states. The Texas Legislature should repeal restrictions on the sale of health, life, title, auto, and other forms of insurance to increase competition and benefit consumers. – *Travis County’s SD 14 Resolutions Committee Report*

Free Market for Utilities and Insurance– We encourage free market solutions for providing utilities wherever possible. We support that property insurance rates for all types of insurance, including health, life, title, auto, and homeowners, should be set through free-market forces alone. We support efforts to shrink the Texas Windstorm Insurance Association to reduce the liabilities it imposes on state taxpayers. – *Proposed changes to the existing Free Market for Utilities and Insurance plank under the Strengthening the Economy section*

Competition in the market place is essential to strengthening the Texas economy. This, along with supporting the individual rights that underlie competition, is one of the things that makes Texas the best place to live and do business in the world. Over the years, Texas has opened up most of its insurance market to competition. Title insurance remains the biggest, most harmful exception:

- Texas has the most heavily regulated title insurance market in the country. Title 11, Texas Insurance Code, states, “The purpose of this title is to completely regulate the business of title insurance on real property...”
- A recent poll found that 91 percent of Texans agree that since they can shop around for automobile and home insurance, they should be able to shop around for the best deals on title insurance.
- Residential and commercial title insurance rates in Texas are significantly more expensive than in other states; this could negatively impact the growth of the Texas economy and the relocation and expansion of businesses in Texas..

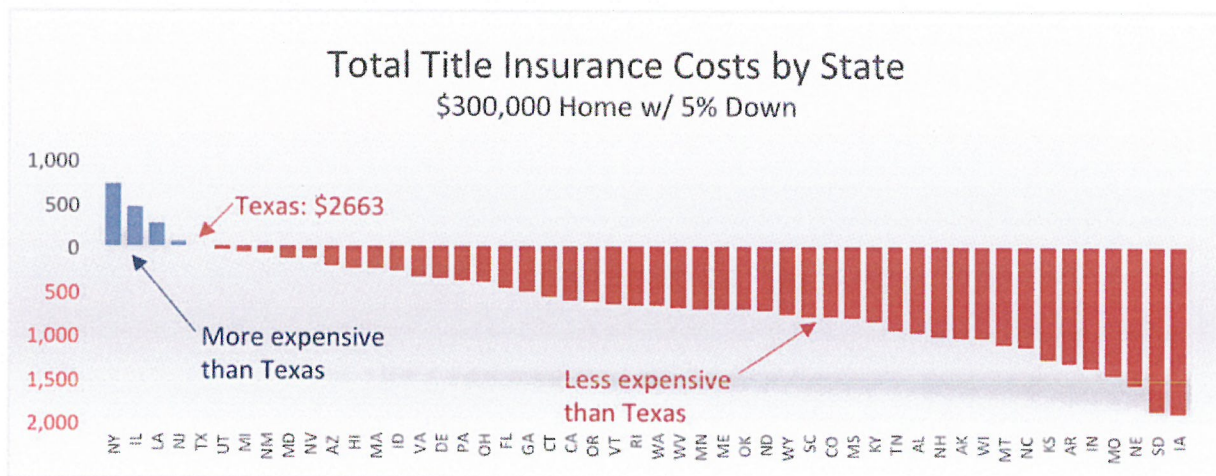
HOUSTON CHRONICLE

High Title Insurance Costs Spur Calls for Reform

Tuesday, February 2, 2016
By Elena Mejia, Houston Chronicle

AUSTIN — Complaining that Texans now pay the highest title insurance rates in the country, a powerful duo of business and conservative groups called Tuesday for sweeping reforms to lower the costs by dropping anti-competition rules.

According to a study commissioned by Hammonds group, 91 percent of Texans say that if they can shop around for automobile and home insurance, they should be able to shop around for the best deals on title insurance.



Estimates based on price data obtained from Bank of America, Stewart Title, Fidelity Title, First American Title, Entitle Direct, and Old Republic Title

- Reforming title insurance regulation by moving to a file and use system in Texas would open up the title insurance business to competition, resulting in more choices and lower prices for consumers and business, along with a stronger economy and more jobs.