From the Commission

Texas is a great place to live and work, thanks to a wealth of natural resources that enhance our economy and provide an abundance of recreational opportunities. With projections showing the state's population to increase significantly in the coming decades, protecting these important natural resources, as well as protecting human health, can pose increasingly complex challenges for state leaders.

As this report demonstrates, addressing these challenges is a crucial job of the TCEQ. As one of the most comprehensive state environmental agencies in the nation, the TCEQ works with stakeholders, legislative resources, and the citizens of Texas to protect the state's environmental quality and the public health by ensuring clean air, clean water, and the safe management of waste.

Texas is a leader when it comes to protecting the environment, and has proven that growth is not incompatible with pollution prevention and reduction. Our desire for a healthy environment goes hand-in-hand with our expectation of a sound, vibrant economy—both of which we enjoy in Texas.

The state has been especially successful in reducing air pollution. For example, in the last eight years, ozone has been reduced by 22 percent across the state, and NO_x, a precursor to ozone formation, was reduced by 53 percent from 2000 to 2008. And although Texas has some of the most highly industrialized and populated areas in the nation, air quality in these and other areas of the state continues to improve and is comparable to or better than that of similar areas in other states.

New, more stringent federal air quality pollution standards, expected to take effect in fiscal 2011, also pose challenges by causing concern for areas of the state currently in attainment.

As an agency, we will meet the challenges that lie ahead. We will achieve our goals by continuing to incorporate the latest scientific methods and research with cutting-edge technology in order to strategically investigate, evaluate, and improve the environment. As Commissioners, we will continue to serve our beautiful state and continue to strive to make Texas a better place for all Texans!

Bryan W. Shaw, Ph.D. | Chairman **Buddy Garcia** | Commissioner **Carlos Rubinstein** | Commissioner