

Texas' Implementation of Its SIP Is a Model for Other States to Follow

Transcript of former EPA Region 6 Administrator and former Arlington mayor Richard Greene's acceptance speech at the Environmental Excellence Awards banquet, TCEQ Environmental Trade Fair, May 2009. [Video available online.](#)

Mayor Greene: I always was fond during my six years of service as Region Administrator of being careful about how I bragged about the relationship between the EPA and the model state of Texas. And since we have other states in the region, I — I always was a little cautious about not going too overboard with that. But I'm no longer confined to those limitations anymore, and so these days I'm able to say with a great sense of — of truth and — and — and — and — and — and demonstration of how it's supposed to work that in the Environmental Protection Agency there is a — an assignment that we have to work with the states of our country in a close partnership in carrying out our mutual and joint missions.

And I can say to you, based on my own experience and — and — and I don't think I'd have to convince anyone in this room, that nowhere else in the country is that partnership better demonstrated than it is in the great state of Texas and the leadership at TCEQ, and all of you in the room who are associated with this great state agency, are the reason that we're able to say, look at us, this is the way it's supposed to work, and this is how we make progress, and this is how our work results in longer and healthier lives for the people of — of our state and of the communities and — and by example, the rest the country.

And those aren't just braggadocio, Texan-speak type of words. We can point to actual results. And just the one that I think perhaps is among them all is the fact that the Dallas–Fort Worth area has achieved something that no other area of the country has yet achieved in advancing our mission to improve air quality.

The Dallas–Fort Worth area state implementation plan — it was approved by the Environmental Protection Agency last year — is the first, and continues to be as of now, the only one in the country that has achieved that status. And it is truly a national demonstration of how this ought to work, because it wasn't what the EPA did, it wasn't what TCEQ alone did, although they led the effort — it's their responsibility to write these things —

but through their inspiration to include and involve local leaders and businesses and the community that was in need of this help and this air quality improvement, then we had a true partnership in all levels of government that produced an incredible result, and one that we're extremely proud of.

My good friend and — and colleague, Larry Starfield, who is also here with us tonight, and I were going over what has happened since I left, where that is concerned. And — and — and I guess it's probably not an error to — to say so, but we've passed the point where anyone who wanted to challenge that decision would've had the opportunity to do so, *and no one has*, which is a different kind of confirmation that the work of TCEQ, EPA, and the local community produced extraordinary results for the people of our communities and so it is with that kind of relationship that this award is all that more meaningful and important to me and my family. So with a great sense of gratitude, I express my heartiest appreciation for it. Thank you very much.

[Applause]

TCEQ Chairman Garcia: If we could have the mayor's comments reduced to writing and presented to your successor — I kind of like the way that sounded. Thank you, Mayor, for your six years of service to the Environmental Protection Agency, to Texas, and to this nation.

For the video of this speech, go online to www.tceq.state.tx.us/goto/texas-sip