

Former Rice University President David Leebron to Lead Premier Nonpartisan Think Tank Texas 2036

David Leebron Named Incoming President and CEO of Texas 2036

AUSTIN, TEXAS, USA, February 6, 2024 /EINPresswire.com/ -- The nonpartisan, nonprofit policy organization Texas 2036 announced today that former Rice University President David Leebron will join the organization as its new president and CEO. An esteemed leader and legal scholar, Leebron brings over 20 years of proven experience building impactful organizations at the highest levels. He will succeed Margaret Spellings, former Secretary of Education.

"I am grateful for the opportunity to lead the impressive and dedicated team that Tom Luce and Margaret Spellings assembled at Texas 2036, and I am honored that the board from across the state selected me as its next president and CEO," Leebron said. "In today's polarized political environment, Texas 2036 plays a critical role in bringing people together to advance nonpartisan policies, based on data and research, that address issues vitally important to the future of this state and its people. I am inspired and excited to take on this next challenge and contribute more broadly to the state of Texas, and look forward to building on the momentum and impact that has already been achieved."

As president of Rice University, Leebron oversaw substantial growth, both of research and the student body – and he accomplished this while making the prestigious university more affordable and accessible to Texans and others from all walks of life. While Leebron raised the national and international reputation and profile of the university, he also focused on its relationship with Houston and worked closely with the Houston mayor and others to build a



David Leebron joins Texas 2036

more impactful relationship with the city, including the Kinder Institute for Urban Research and the creation of the Ion, the Houston innovation hub and district.

“David is the perfect person to carry forward the long-term, data-driven approach to a changing world that our founder, Tom Luce, envisioned. I know he is eager to bring the kind of strong engagement he fostered across Houston to Texas 2036, where he can positively impact the lives of all Texans as the state approaches its bicentennial,” said Marc Watts, Texas 2036 board chair and president of The Friedkin Group in Houston. “Texas 2036 has a proven track record of achieving results across a wide range of challenges that Texas must address, but there’s more work to be done. David has the expertise and experience to get strong results – not only for Texas 2036 but for the state.”



David Leebron

“We met with several exceptional candidates as part of a nationwide search, and David’s strategic approach and experienced leadership stood out,” said Elaine Mendoza, Texas 2036 legislative committee chair and president and CEO of Conceptual MindWorks, Inc. in San Antonio. “His dedication to forward-thinking solutions makes him the perfect choice to lead Texas 2036, and I look forward to working with him and the policy team to adopt a robust legislative agenda for next year.”

Texas 2036 Founder Tom Luce agrees.

“Our state is growing rapidly, and that growth brings long-term challenges that require us to develop smart solutions,” he said. “David has a proven track record of thinking long term, identifying the big challenges and planning for success, which is exactly what Texas 2036 – and Texas – needs at this point in our state’s history.”

An academic of the highest order, Leebron graduated from Harvard Law School where he was president of the Harvard Law Review and appointed his classmate Chief Justice John Roberts as managing editor. He taught at the UCLA School of Law, New York University School of Law, and Columbia School of Law where he became dean in 1996. In 2004, he was appointed president of Rice University where he focused on growing the size and diversity of the student body and the scope of the education and research mission. He is married to Houston attorney and prominent community leader Y. Ping Sun. They have two children.

Leebron will complete the spring semester at Rice University and begin work as president-

designate with the Texas 2036 board, senior management and staff to define the organization's strategic direction, meet with policymakers and stakeholders from across the state, and seek opportunities to expand partnerships with research-affiliated institutions before formally assuming the role of president and CEO this summer. He will also remain on the faculty of Rice University and continue teaching one course at Rice in the fall.

A nonprofit public policy organization committed to building long-term, data-driven strategies to ensure Texas' prosperity up to its bicentennial and beyond, Texas 2036 is the leading comprehensive state-wide non-partisan institute for developing long-term solutions grounded in thorough research and focused on issues critical to the lives and livelihoods of all Texans. Texas 2036 has supported the passage of over 120 bills and constitutional amendments that will deliver billions in savings and strategic investments to the state. These new laws grow opportunities for all Texans while sustaining Texas' business climate by strengthening our workforce, reducing health care spending and improving critical infrastructure.

To learn more, visit www.texas2036.org.

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