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500 West 13th Street
Austin, TX 78701

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www.cuc.org

Policy Committee Meeting
Travis County Building
700 Lavaca Street
January 14, 2015

Agenda

9:30AM Convene.

1. Welcome, Introductions.
2. Administrative issues [Ms. Shannon McDonald].
 - a) Consider the minutes from the October 15, 2014 meeting. [pg 8]
 - b) Next meeting: Wednesday, February 11, 2015.

Policy Committee Attendance Record 2014-2015

Policy Committee Members	County	01/15/14	04/02/14	07/30/14	10/15/14	01/14/15	02/11/15	03/11/15	04/08/15	04/29/15	05/20/15	06/10/15	08/12/15	11/04/15
Chairman Judge Ed Emmett	Harris County	✓	✓	✓	✓									
Commissioner Tim Brown	Bell County	✓	✓	✓	✓									
Commissioner Kevin Wolff	Bexar County	✓	P	P	P									
Commissioner Larry Stanley	Brazoria County	x	x	x	x									
Commissioner Kenny Mallard	Brazos County				✓									
Commissioner Dan Sanchez	Cameron County	x	x	✓	✓									
Commissioner Chris Hill	Collin County	✓	✓	✓	✓									
Commissioner Theresa Daniel	Dallas County	✓	✓	✓	✓									
Commissioner Bobbie Mitchell	Denton County	✓	✓	✓	✓									
Judge Veronica Escobar	El Paso County	✓	✓	✓	E									
Judge Robert Hebert	Fort Bend County	✓	✓	✓	✓									
Commissioner Ken Clark	Galveston County	x	✓	✓	x									
Commissioner Joseph Palacios	Hidalgo County	x	x	x	x									
Commissioner Eddie Arnold	Jefferson County	✓	E	✓	✓									
Commissioner Bill McCay	Lubbock County	✓	✓	P	P									
Judge Mike Bradford	Midland County	P	P	✓	✓									
Judge Loyd Neal	Nueces County	✓	✓	✓	✓									
Commissioner Fred Nardini	San Patricio County	✓	✓	✓	✓									
Judge Glen Whitley	Tarrant County	✓	P	✓	E									
Commissioner Margaret Gomez	Travis County	x	✓	✓	✓									
Judge Dan Gattis	Williamson County	✓	x	✓	✓									
Commissioner Kevin Burns	Wise County	✓	✓	✓	✓									

✓ - Present x - Absent P - Present by Proxy E - Excused Absence

3. Discuss SB 182 by Bettencourt and HB 365 by Elkins, which would lower the rollback rate to 4% and make the rollback election automatic. [Mr. Donald Lee] **NO ACTION. STAFF WILL BRING BACK**
4. Discuss HB 133 by Simpson, which repeals the sanctions imposed for a change of use of land that has previously been appraised as agricultural property. [Mr. Donald Lee] [pg 11] **NO ACTION. STAFF WILL BRING BACK**

ADOPTED. 5. Consider a way to increase health coverage in Texas. [Mr. Donald Lee] [pg 12]

NO DISSENT

VOTED YES

Recommended Resolution:

RESOLVED by the Texas Conference of Urban Counties Policy Committee that the Health and Human Services Section of the Policy Platform is amended as follows:

Support state action related to state participation in the funding of indigent health care to maximize access to available federal funds.

ADOPTED 6. Consider options for the Driver Responsibility Program. [Mr. Donald Lee] [pg 13]

AS AMENDED.

NO DISSENT

VOTED YES

Recommended Resolution:

RESOLVED by the Texas Conference of Urban Counties Policy Committee that the Health and Human Services Section of the Policy Platform is amended as follows:

Not oppose the repeal of the Drivers Responsibility Program.)

*BUT SUPPORT CONTINUED
FUNDING FOR TRAUMA
CARE CENTERS.*

ADOPTED. 7. Discuss and consider the repeal of a loophole that allows leased heavy equipment to be valued at a much lower rate than market value. [Mr. Donald Lee] [pg 14]

NO DISSENT

VOTED YES

Recommended Resolution:

Resolved by the Texas Conference of Urban Counties Policy Committee that the Taxation Section of the Policy Platform is amended as follows:

Repeal the loophole allowing leased heavy equipment to be valued for property taxes as 1/12th of annual leased revenue rather than market value.

ADOPTED 8. Consider raising the age of criminal responsibility to 18. [Mr. John Dahill] [pg 18]

AS AMENDED.

NO DISSENT

VOTED YES

Recommended Resolution:

RESOLVED by the Texas Conference of Urban Counties Policy Committee that the Juvenile and Criminal Justice Section of the Policy Platform is amended as follows:

Support additional state funding for juvenile probation departments ~~necessitated~~ ~~by raising the age of criminal responsibility to 18.~~

*SHOULD THE LEGISLATURE
RAISE*

ADOPTED 9. Consider authority to regulate weapons on county premises. [Mr. John Dahill] [pg 19]

VOTED NO

Recommended Resolution:

RESOLVED by the Texas Conference of Urban Counties Policy Committee that the Revenue, Budget, and Miscellaneous section of the Policy Platform is amended as follows:

Protect current county authority to regulate the carrying of weapons on county premises.

ADOPTED 10. Consider electronic publication of public notices. [Mr. John Dahill] [pg 20]

NO DISSSENT

Recommended Resolution:

RESOLVED by the Texas Conference of Urban Counties Policy Committee that the Revenue, Budget, and Miscellaneous Section of the Policy Platform is amended as follows:

Support legislation that permits counties to post public notices electronically in lieu of print publication.

VOTED YES

11. Consider penalties of enforcement of federal laws and regulations. [Mr. John Dahill] [pg 21]

Recommended Resolution:

RESOLVED by the Texas Conference of Urban Counties Policy Committee that the Revenue, Budget, and Miscellaneous Section of the Policy Platform is amended as follows:

Oppose any statutory provisions that would financially punish a county for actions other than those of the county's commissioners court.

12. Consider adding religious freedom restoration to the Constitution. [Mr. John Dahill] [pg 22]

Recommended Resolution:

RESOLVED by the Texas Conference of Urban Counties Policy Committee that the Revenue, Budget, and Miscellaneous Section of the Policy Platform is amended as follows:

Oppose amending the State Constitution to protect religious rights unless governmental entities are not subject to new liability for actions resulting in insubstantial burdens on a person's exercise of those rights.

13. Discuss HB 490/HJR 57 by Representative Rodriguez and consider updating an existing platform item to support more options for local taxing units to set an appropriate homestead exemption amount. [Mr. Michael Vasquez]

Recommended Resolution:

Resolved by the Texas Conference of Urban Counties Policy Committee that the Taxation Section of the Policy Platform is amended as follows:

Support allowing local taxing units to set a residence homestead exemption as [either a percentage or flat-dollar level] a percentage, a flat-dollar level, or a percentage with a maximum individual value.

OPPOSED

TABLED.
STAFF WILL REVISE.

OPPOSED
AMENDED, BUT STILL OPPOSED.

FOR COUNTIES

TABLED.
STAFF WILL REVISE

ADOPTED AS AMENDED.
NO DISSSENT
VOTED YES

MINIMUM AND/OR

- ADOPTED 14. Consider legislation to end or reduce diversion of funds from the state highway fund.
OFFERED Consider a recommended amendment to the Transportation section of the Urban
AMENDMENT, Counties Policy Platform. [Mr. Michael Vasquez] [pg 25]
BUT REJECTED

Recommended Resolution:

RESOLVED by the Texas Conference of Urban Counties Policy Committee that the Transportation section of the Policy Platform is amended as follows:

VOTED YES

Support ~~the reduction, or if possible,~~ the elimination of diversions from the State Highway Fund.

~~[Support a state budget that ends diversions of highway funds to state agencies such as DPS and SOAH.]~~

- ADOPTED 15. Discuss Local Administration of LIRAP Funding. [Mr. Michael Vasquez] [pg 26]

NO DISSENT

Recommended Resolution:

RESOLVED by the Texas Conference of Urban Counties Policy Committee that the Clean Air Act section of the Policy Platform is amended as follows:

VOTED YES

Support local administration of the LIRAP and LIP programs to ensure funds collected in the county are used in the county.

16. Discuss draft proposals for improvements to TERP. [Mr. Michael Vasquez] [pg 27]

- ADOPTED 17. Discuss and consider a support item from Travis County.

NO DISSENT

Recommended Resolution:

RESOLVED by the Texas Conference of Urban Counties Policy Committee that the Support Section of the Policy Platform is amended as follows:

VOTED YES

Tax Lien. Support clarification that a tax lien by a governmental entity reaches all tangible business personal property of a taxpayer, wherever it is located. Travis County

- ADOPTED 18. Discuss legislative proposals from Collin County and consider amendments to the Policy Platform. [pg 28]

NO DISSENT

- a) End the reliance and utilization of dedicated revenues to balance the state funds to certify the State budget.

VOTED YES

Recommended Resolution:

RESOLVED by the Texas Conference of Urban Counties Policy Committee that the Juvenile and Criminal Justice Section of the Policy Platform is amended as follows:

~~[Support restoration of dedicated funds to their original purposes.]~~

Recommended Resolution:

RESOLVED by the Texas Conference of Urban Counties Policy Committee that the the Principles Section of the Policy Platform is amended as follows:

Urban Counties believes that funds collected for a purpose should be used for that purpose and supports ending the reliance and utilization of dedicated revenues to balance the State budget.

- b) Provide commissioners court authority to recover costs to offset the impact of utility constuction that crosses county roads.

Recommended Resolution:

RESOLVED by the Texas Conference of Urban Counties Policy Committee that the Support Section of the Policy Platform is amended as follows:

Utility Construction Impact. Support granting authority to commissioners court to recover costs incurred from utility construction that crosses county roads. Collin County

- c) Provide counties with the ability to adopt and enforce a noise ordinance in the same manner as cities.

Recommended Resolution:

RESOLVED by the Texas Conference of Urban Counties Policy Committee that the Support Section of the Policy Platform is amended as follows:

Noise Ordinance. Support providing counties with the ability to adopt and enforce a noise ordinance in the same manner as cities. Collin County

- d) Support adequately funding the cost for visiting judges in the state district courts.

Recommended Resolution:

RESOLVED by the Texas Conference of Urban Counties Policy Committee that the Support Section of the Policy Platform is amended as follows:

Visiting Judges Salary. Support a requirement that judicial salary saved due to a judicial vacancy inures to the benefit of the judicial district where the vacancy occurs to be used to fund visiting judges. Collin County

- e) Support the use of electronic court reporting for all newly created courts.

Recommended Resolution:

RESOLVED by the Texas Conference of Urban Counties Policy Committee that the Support Section of the Policy Platform is amended as follows:

Electronic Court Reporting. Support a requirement that electronic court reporting be used for all newly created courts. Collin County

- f) Support expansion of a bracket to allow the Collin County Sheriff or a deputy to enforce TxDOT regulations for commercial vehicles.

AMENDED TO INCLUDE ALL COUNTIES
W/ POPULATION OVER 500,000

ADOPTED
NO DISSSENT
VOTED YES

WIDE OPPOSITION
FAILED FOR
LACK OF MOTION

ADOPTED
NO DISSSENT
VOTED YES

ADOPTED
NO DISSSENT
VOTED YES

ADOPTED
VOTED YES
ONE VOTE NO

Recommended Resolution:

RESOLVED by the Texas Conference of Urban Counties Policy Committee that the Support Section of the Policy Platform is amended as follows:

Commercial Vehicle Standards Enforcement. Support expanding the bracket to include Collin County in the counties that can enforce TxDOT regulations for commercial vehicles. *Collin County*

ADOPTED
ONE NO VOTE

VOTED YES

- g) Support allowing a repeat DWI offender to get an occupational drivers license for work and treatment.

Recommended Resolution:

RESOLVED by the Texas Conference of Urban Counties Policy Committee that the Support Section of the Policy Platform is amended as follows:

Occupation Drivers License. Support allowing repeat DWI offenders to get an occupational drivers license for work and treatment. *Collin County*

ADOPTED
NO DISSENT

VOTED YES

- h) Support allowing for the write off of bad debt for court collections.

Recommended Resolution:

RESOLVED by the Texas Conference of Urban Counties Policy Committee that the Support Section of the Policy Platform is amended as follows:

Bad Debt. Support granting counties authority to write off as bad debt uncollectable fees, fines and costs for courts. *Collin County*

19. Discuss legislative proposals from Hidalgo County and consider amendments to the Support section of the Policy Platform. [Mr. Donald Lee] [pg 30]

ADOPTED
ONE ABSTENTION

VOTED YES

- a) Support broadening the counties authority for advertising, including online advertising.

Recommended Resolution:

RESOLVED by the Texas Conference of Urban Counties Policy Committee that the Support Section of the Policy Platform is amended as follows:

County Advertising Authority. Support leasing advertising space on county real and personal property. *Hidalgo County*

ADOPTED
NO DISSENT

VOTED YES

- b) Amend the law to allow the county to go to a JP for an injunction for contempt of the "one single family dwelling per lot" rule.

Recommended Resolution:

RESOLVED by the Texas Conference of Urban Counties Policy Committee that the Support Section of the Policy Platform is amended as follows:

Single Family Injunction. Support allowing a JP to enforce the "one single family dwelling per lot" rule. *Hidalgo County*

WIDE
OPPOSITION

20. Consider a request for support for a deposit on beverage containers. [Mr. Michael Vasquez] [pg 31]

Recommended Resolution:

FAILED FOR
LACK OF A
SECOND

RESOLVED by the Texas Conference of Urban Counties Policy Committee that the Support Section of the Policy Platform is amended as follows:

Bottle Deposit. Support a refundable deposit on beverage containers to reduce litter and fund cleanup efforts. *Texas for Clean Water*

TRAVIS
COUNTY
SUPPORTED

21. New business.

11:30 AM Adjourn.

**Policy Committee Meeting
Travis County Building, 700 Lavaca St
Austin, Texas 78701
October 15, 2014**

Minutes

Members Present

Chairman Ed Emmett
Commissioner Tim Brown
Commissioner Kevin Wolff (proxy Seth Mitchell)
Commissioner Kenny Mallard
Commissioner Dan Sanchez
Commissioner Chris Hill
Commissioner Theresa Daniel
Commissioner Bobbie Mitchell
Judge Robert Hebert
Commissioner Eddie Arnold
Commissioner Bill McCay (proxy Mark Heinrich)
Judge Mike Bradford
Judge Loyd Neal
Commissioner Fred Nardini
Commissioner Margaret Gomez
Judge Dan Gattis
Commissioner Kevin Burns

Others Present

Mr. Craig Pardue, Dallas County
Mr. Charles Reed, Dallas County
Ms. Donna Warndorf, Harris County
Ms. Carole Lamont, Harris County
Mr. R. King Hillier, Harris County Hospital District
Mr. Peter Einhorn, Travis County
Mr. Deece Eckstein, Travis County
Ms. Julie Wheeler, Travis County
Mr. Josh Brewer, Travis County
Mr. Bob Moore, Travis County
Ms. Ann-Marie Price, Travis County Healthcare District
Ms. Carsi Mitzner, Adams & Zottarelli
Mr. Angelo Zottarelli, Adams & Zottarelli
Ms. Claudia Russell, Bickerstaff, Heath, Delgado & Acosta
Mr. Fred Hill, Solutions for Local Control
Mr. Don Lee, Urban Counties
Mr. John Dahill, Urban Counties
Mr. Michael Vasquez, Urban Counties
Ms. Shannon McDonald, Urban Counties
Ms. Windy Johnson, Urban Counties
Mr. Randy Wadley, Urban Counties

Judge Emmett called the meeting to order at 10:30 a.m.

The Committee considered Agenda Item 2(a), approval of the minutes of the July 30, 2014 meeting. On a motion by Commissioner Arnold and a second by Judge Gattis, the minutes were approved as presented.

The Committee considered Item 7, appointment of counsel in child protective services cases. On a motion by Judge Neal and a second by Judge Hebert the following resolution was approved as presented:

RESOLVED by the Policy Committee of the Texas Conference of Urban Counties that the Revenue, Budget, and Miscellaneous section of the Policy Platform is amended as follows:

Support full state funding for representation of indigent parties in child welfare cases.

The Committee discussed Item 6, the study of necessity of court costs and fees.

The Committee discussed Item 4, the Mental Health Data Collection Project.

Commissioner Daniel joined the meeting.

The Committee discussed Item 5, possible legislation by Senator Watson mandating changes to homestead exemptions. On a motion by Commissioner Gomez and a second by Commissioner Daniel, the following resolutions were approved as presented:

RESOLVED by the Texas Conference of Urban Counties Policy Committee that the Taxation Section of the Policy Platform is amended as follows:

Support reforms to process for equity appeals of appraisals.

Support moving up the appraisal notice and protest deadlines to prevent property owners from using the timeline to pressure the appraisal district into a settlement.

Support a reduction in the 8% interest applied to the liens of seniors who defer their property taxes.

On a motion by Commissioner Arnold and a second by Judge Bradford, the following resolution was approved as amended:

RESOLVED by the Texas Conference of Urban Counties Policy Committee that the Taxation Section of the Policy Platform is amended as follows:

Support reforms to the provisions requiring CADs to pay the costs of all successful legal challenges to an appraisal to improve incentives to settle disputes before litigation.

The Committee heard a presentation by Ms. Amy Bishop, Deputy Director of TCDRS and Ms. Ann McGeehan, General Counsel.

The Committee considered Item 8, an amendment to a previously adopted position allowing counties to create Transportation Reinvestment Zones. On a motion by Judge Neal and a second by Commissioner Mitchell, the following resolution was approved:

RESOLVED by the Texas Conference of Urban Counties Policy Committee that the Taxation Section of the Policy Platform is amended as follows:

Amend the Constitution to allow a county to create Reinvestment Zones for tax increment financing.

~~[Allow a county to create a Transportation Reinvestment Zones to finance transportation and infrastructure projects within the county.]~~

~~[Amend the Constitution to authorize counties to create Tax Increment Reinvestment Zones and to issue bonds backed by increment revenues.]~~

The Committee considered Item 9, renewed funding for SB 1747 grants to address shale activity damage and changes to streamline the grant process. On a motion by Judge Neal and a second by Commissioner Nardini, the following resolution was approved as presented:

RESOLVED by the Texas Conference of Urban Counties Policy Committee that the Transportation Section of the Policy Platform is amended as follows:

Support renewed funding for the County Transportation Infrastructure Fund grant program without reducing urban county eligibility and streamline the program to remove bureaucratic costs and paperwork, especially the mandatory creation of a CETRZ and the annual creation of road condition reports.

The Committee considered Item 10, options for the Driver Responsibility Program. On a motion by Commissioner Hill and a second by Commissioner Brown, the following resolution was approved as presented:

RESOLVED by the Texas Conference of Urban Counties Policy Committee that the Health and Human Services Section of the Policy Platform is amended as follows:

Support the repeal of the Driver Responsibility Program.

The Committee considered Item 11, the potential for a sweep of some or all of the fund balance of TERP for transportation purposes as local Clean Air Program funding. On a motion by Commissioner Daniel and a second by Commissioner Gomez, the following resolution was approved as amended:

RESOLVED by the Texas Conference of Urban Counties Policy Committee that the Clean Air Act Section of the Policy Platform is amended as follows:

Support using TERP and LIRAP fund balances on a one-time basis for congestion relief transportation projects as long as:
- it does not impair SIP compliance;
- LIRAP funds are distributed on an equitable basis in non-attainment and near non-attainment areas participating in LIRAP; and
- is in addition to transportation funding for those areas.

The Committee considered Item 12, a request by Texas for Clean Water for support in passing legislation to require a deposit on beverage containers. The item was tabled until the next meeting.

The Committee discussed Item 13, and update on HRSG applications for tax exemption determinations from TCEQ for pollution control equipment.

The Committee discussed Item 14, budget priorities for the 84th Session.

The Committee discussed Item 15, an update on Sunset Commission review.

There was no new business.

The meeting adjourned at 1:48 p.m.

Vice Chairman of Policy
Judge Ed Emmett

Date



January 14, 2015

Chairman
Commissioner
Bobbie Mitchell
Denton County

To: Urban Counties Policy Committee

From: Donald Lee, Executive Director

Chair Elect
Judge
Veronica Escobar
El Paso County

Re: **Discussion of Legislation to Eliminate the Ag Exemption Change of Use Penalty**

Immediate Past Chair
Commissioner
Eddie Arnold
Jefferson County

Background:

House Bill 133 by David Simpson would repeal the sanctions imposed for a change of use of land that has been previously appraised as agricultural property. The sanctions currently act as a disincentive for some land owners to obtain lower tax rates that were meant to protect and preserve agricultural and open space uses, while they wait for market conditions to improve or while planning a commercial project.

Vice-Chairmen

Tim Brown
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Harris County
Comm. Fred Nardini
San Patricio County
Judge Glen Whitley
Tarrant County
Judge Dan Gattis
Williamson County
Comm. Kevin Burns
Wise County

The legislation repeals Tax Code Section 23.55, which currently provides:

- An additional tax is imposed on the land equal to the difference between the taxes imposed in the last five years and the tax that would have been imposed had the land been appraised based on market value;
- Seven percent interest on an annual basis;
- A tax lien attaches to the land to secure payment for the taxing units;
- Notice from the chief appraiser must explain the right to protest the determination; and
- Several exemptions exist (for charitable uses, public uses, schools, etc.) allowing use to change without incurring the sanctions.

Executive Director
Donald Lee

No recommendation is being made at this time so that the committee may discuss the bill and determine if a direct response is needed.

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Recommended Resolution

None at this time.

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To: Urban Counties Policy Committee

From: Windy Johnson, Program Manager

Re: **Consideration of a Texas Way to Increase Health Coverage**

Increased health care coverage using money from the Federal Affordable Care Act will be an issue during the upcoming legislative session, as it was last session.

According to the Tobacco Settlement Trust report, Hospital Districts and Counties provided more than \$2.6 billion in unreimbursed health care services in 2013.

Advocates are proposing various ways the state could provide more access to health care without acquiescing to guidelines under Medicaid.

One option being proposed is the "Texas Way", which is a private insurance market-based alternative to Medicaid, which includes copays and a sliding scale subsidies.

Last session the Urban Counties Policy Committee adopted the resolution recommended below.

Recommend Resolution:

Resolved by the Texas Conference of Urban Counties Policy Committee that the Health and Human Services section of the platform be amended by including a new item to read as follows:

Support state action related to state participation in the funding of indigent health care to maximize access to available federal funds.



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To: Urban Counties Policy Committee
From: Windy Johnson, Program Manager
Re: **Driver Responsibility Program**

Background:

During the October 15th meeting, the Policy Committee approved a resolution to support the repeal of the Driver Responsibility Program. When presented to the membership, it was asked that the committee reconsider this position.

While there are various pros and cons with the Drivers Responsibility Program it is recommended the committee adopt a position on this issue that is less restrictive.

Recommended Resolution

RESOLVED by the Texas Conference of Urban Counties Policy Committee that the Health and Human Services Section of the Policy Platform is amended as follows:

Not oppose the repeal of the Drivers Responsibility Program.

January 14, 2015

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To: Urban Counties Policy Committee

From: Michael Vasquez, Program Manager

Re: **Discussion of a Tax Loophole for Leased Heavy Equipment**

Background:

There are reports from some counties regarding a recent statute change that is being used by some companies to claim a dramatically reduced value for leased heavy equipment based on its "inventory value" value rather than the market value as required under the Texas Constitution.

Legislation was passed in 2011 that provides a method for valuing heavy equipment based on one month's rent instead of market value. This was modeled on the "inventory" method created for auto sales lots whereby the taxable value of the inventory on the lot is 1/12th of the total sales for the year.

Some oil companies have formed subsidiaries to hold expensive heavy equipment, such as compressors, that are then leased back to the parent company, with the subsidiary then requesting a much lower valuation based on the monthly rental amount.

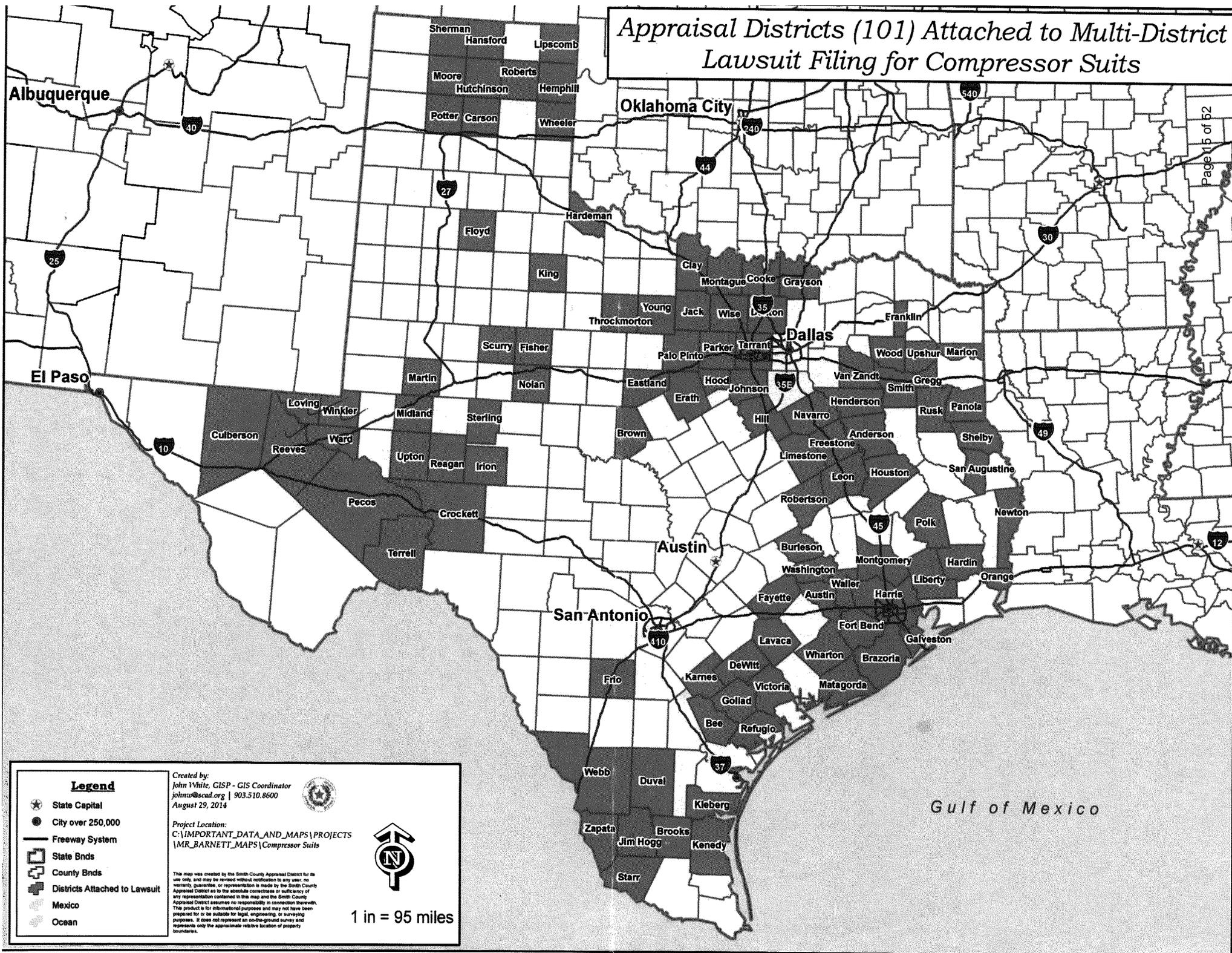
One news article described an oil company that formed a subsidiary, that then leased a compressor valued at \$1 million to the parent company at a cost of \$12,000 per year. The subsidiary then claimed the new taxable value of the compressor was \$1,000.

Recommended Resolution

RESOLVED by the Texas Conference of Urban Counties Policy Committee that the Taxation Section of the Urban Counties Policy Platform is amended to include the following:

Repeal the loophole allowing leased heavy equipment to be valued for property taxes as 1/12th of annual leased revenue rather than market value.

Appraisal Districts (101) Attached to Multi-District Lawsuit Filing for Compressor Suits



Legend

- State Capital
- City over 250,000
- Freeway System
- State Bnds
- County Bnds
- Districts Attached to Lawsuit
- Mexico
- Ocean

Created by:
John White, GISP - GIS Coordinator
johnw@scad.org | 903.510.8600
August 29, 2014

Project Location:
C:\IMPORTANT_DATA_AND_MAPS\PROJECTS
[MR_BARNETT_MAPS\Compressor Suits

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1 in = 95 miles

DISTRICT	NAME OF DISTRICT	2012	2013	2014	VALUE IN DISPUTE
Anderson	Anderson County Appraisal District	\$311,315	\$1,159,035	\$1,159,035	\$2,629,385
Austin	Austin County Appraisal District	\$1,718,400	\$1,671,740	\$2,152,550	\$5,542,690
Bee	Bee County Appraisal District	\$800,010	\$495,810		\$1,295,820
Brazoria	Brazoria County Appraisal District	\$8,158,676	\$6,537,597	\$9,302,698	\$23,998,971
Brown	Brown County Appraisal District	\$36,460	\$36,460	\$36,460	\$36,460
Brooks	Brooks County Appraisal District	\$3,404,820	\$5,829,410	\$1,216,160	\$10,450,390
Burleson	Burleson County Appraisal District				
Carson	Carson County Appraisal District	\$113,880	\$111,680	\$110,120	\$335,680
Clay	Clay County Appraisal District	\$847,580	\$1,377,620		\$2,225,200
Cooke	Cooke County Appraisal District	\$6,112,040	\$7,567,090	\$7,864,740	\$21,543,870
Crockett	Crockett County Appraisal District	\$8,805,080	\$5,728,550	\$9,835,480	\$24,369,110
Culberson	Culberson County Appraisal District	\$942,130			\$942,130
Denton	Denton County Appraisal District	\$14,166,780	\$25,170,307	\$29,519,459	\$68,856,546
DeWitt	DeWitt County Appraisal District	\$3,382,590	\$4,731,230	\$4,687,480	\$12,801,300
Duval	Duval County Appraisal District	unknown	unknown	unknown	unknown
Eastland	Eastland County Appraisal District	\$643,190			\$643,190
Erath	Erath County Appraisal District	\$751,110	\$730,350	\$298,240	\$1,779,700
Fayette	Fayette County Appraisal District	\$4,293,360	\$3,212,930	\$3,226,720	\$10,733,010
Fisher	Fisher County Appraisal District	\$184,320	\$189,440	\$194,560	\$568,320
Floyd	Floyd County Appraisal District				not enough in value
Fort Bend	Fort Bend Central Appraisal District	\$964,230	\$387,580	\$320,660	\$1,672,470
Franklin	Franklin County Appraisal District				
Freestone	Freestone County Appraisal District	\$43,694,440	\$14,961,900	\$12,903,530	\$71,559,870
Frio	Frio County Appraisal District	\$413,850	\$3,850,000		\$4,263,850
Galveston	Galveston Central Appraisal District				\$6,000,000
Goliad	Goliad County Appraisal District	\$3,556,361	\$3,556,361	\$3,556,361	\$10,669,083
Grayson	Grayson Central Appraisal District	\$96,948			\$96,948
Gregg	Gregg County Appraisal District	\$198,002,790	\$36,867,960	\$182,810	\$235,053,560
Hansford	Hansford County Appraisal District	\$273,310	\$190,350	\$194,900	\$658,560
Hardeman	Hardeman County Appraisal District	\$291,320	\$1,442,460	\$2,006,680	\$3,740,460
Hardin	Hardin County Appraisal District		\$17,900	\$31,971	\$49,871
Harris	Harris County Appraisal District	\$7,175,040	\$8,836,060		\$16,011,100
Hemphill	Hemphill County Appraisal District	\$26,262,020	\$37,382,120	\$39,646,310	\$103,290,450
Henderson	Henderson County Appraisal District	\$222,984	\$214,514	\$235,138	\$672,636
Hill	Hill County Appraisal District	\$1,058,970	\$705,900	\$521,760	\$2,286,630
Hood	Hood County Appraisal District		\$1,200,000		\$1,200,000
Houston	Houston County Appraisal District	\$3,938,670	\$3,828,370	\$5,874,090	\$13,641,130
Hutchinson	Hutchinson County Appraisal District	\$1,660,200	\$1,446,210		\$3,106,410
Irion	Irion County Appraisal District	\$151,560	\$2,116,130	\$35,685,530	\$38,063,220
Jack	Jack County Appraisal District	\$3,670,460	\$10,079,990	\$1,512,940	\$15,263,390
Jim Hogg	Jim Hogg County Appraisal District	\$1,704,580	\$1,858,380	\$2,394,130	\$5,957,090
Johnson	Johnson County Appraisal District				no value in dispute
Karnes	Karnes County Appraisal District	\$7,189,690	\$14,279,307	\$18,915,590	\$18,915,590
Kenedy	Kenedy County Appraisal District	\$540,950	\$506,550		\$1,047,500
King	King County Appraisal District		\$1,131,470	\$1,119,890	\$2,251,360
Kleberg	Kleberg County Appraisal District		\$330,260		\$330,260
Lavaca	Lavaca County Central Appraisal District	\$159,340	\$159,340	\$159,340	\$159,340
Leon	Leon County Appraisal District	\$3,430,370	\$4,865,580	\$4,561,990	\$12,858,040
Liberty	Liberty County Central Appraisal District	\$3,160,000	\$3,500,000	\$3,750,000	\$10,410,000
Limestone	Limestone County Appraisal District	\$2,058,820	\$966,590	\$809,140	\$3,834,550

TEXAS APPRAISAL DISTRICTS:

COMPRESSOR VALUE IN DISPUTE

Prepared by Michael Barnett, Chief Appraiser
Smith County Appraisal District
October 1, 2014

DISTRICT	NAME OF DISTRICT	2012	2013	2014	VALUE IN DISPUTE
Lipscomb	Lipscomb County Appraisal District	\$3,862,520	\$6,832,140	\$6,754,450	\$17,449,110
Loving	Loving County Appraisal District	\$27,576,770	\$28,102,870	\$27,181,330	\$82,860,970
Martin	Martin County Appraisal District	\$2,092,460	\$2,130,830	\$3,650,930	\$7,874,220
Marion	Marion Central Appraisal District	\$1,092,880	\$1,213,140	\$1,591,600	\$3,897,620
Matagorda	Matagorda County Appraisal District	\$4,563,780	\$4,881,821		\$9,445,601
Midland Central	Midland Central Appraisal District	\$13,168,305	\$20,435,600	\$14,897,516	\$48,501,421
Montgomery	Montgomery Central Appraisal District	\$3,862,370	\$5,162,960	\$5,460,910	\$14,486,240
Montague	Montague County Appraisal District	\$420,000	\$990,750	\$35,715,810	\$37,126,560
Moore	Moore County Appraisal District	\$2,727,980	\$2,686,320	\$2,653,570	\$8,067,870
Navarro	Navarro Central Appraisal District	\$46,370	\$67,210	\$69,940	\$183,520
Newton	Newton Central Appraisal District	\$1,306,620	\$1,579,080	\$1,434,690	\$4,320,390
Nolan	Nolan County Appraisal District	\$171,200			not stated
Orange	Orange County Appraisal District	\$822,660	\$474,690	\$120,360	\$1,419,910
Palo	Palo Pinto County Appraisal District	\$7,428,690	\$10,385,980	\$9,365,620	\$27,180,290
Panola	Panola County Appraisal District	\$20,831,130	\$27,209,390		\$48,040,520
Parker	Parker County Appraisal District	\$23,419,680	\$16,607,790	\$12,900,720	\$52,928,190
Pecos	Pecos County Appraisal District	\$23,869,800	\$18,902,430	\$15,355,190	\$58,127,420
Polk	Polk County Appraisal District	\$4,818,325	\$3,565,980	\$3,580,880	\$11,965,185
Potter	Potter County Appraisal District	\$283,670	\$456,880	\$383,330	\$1,123,880
Reagan	Reagan County Appraisal District	\$695,870	\$2,072,100	\$7,193,290	\$9,961,260
Reeves	Reeves County Appraisal District	\$30,600	\$31,200	\$13,114,090	\$13,175,890
Refugio	Refugio County Appraisal District	\$770,860	\$853,160	\$995,150	\$2,619,170
Roberts	Roberts County Appraisal District	\$10,460,250	\$10,470,730	\$8,351,710	\$29,282,690
Robertson	Robertson County Appraisal District		\$871,888		\$871,888
Rusk	Rusk County Appraisal District	\$10,883,460	\$13,725,690	\$40,744,270	\$65,353,420
San Augustine	San Augustine County Appraisal District	\$1,232,960	\$2,384,750	\$1,551,960	\$5,169,670
Scurry	Scurry County Appraisal District	\$945,500	\$905,800	\$882,500	\$2,733,800
Shelby	Shelby County Appraisal District	\$12,685,070	\$6,665,910	\$22,730,610	\$42,081,590
Sherman	Sherman County Appraisal District	\$2,047,840	\$3,026,840	\$2,829,250	\$7,903,930
Smith	Smith County Appraisal District	\$4,952,388	\$4,003,901	\$3,372,991	\$12,329,280
Starr	Starr County Appraisal District				not stated
Sterling	Sterling County Appraisal District	\$435,000	\$414,810	\$430,900	\$1,280,710
Tarrant	Tarrant Appraisal District	\$155,947,621	\$125,019,287	\$133,563,498	\$414,530,406
Terrell	Terrell County Appraisal District	\$7,065,960	\$7,344,790	\$5,554,340	\$19,965,090
Throckmorton	Throckmorton County Appraisal District	\$113,400	\$113,400	\$113,400	\$340,200
Upshur	Upshur County Appraisal District	\$1,057,740			\$1,057,740
Upton	Upton County Appraisal District	\$3,168,920	\$2,148,840	\$4,328,500	\$9,646,260
Van Zandt	Van Zandt County Appraisal District	\$146,690	\$100,000	\$100,000	\$346,690
Victoria	Victoria Central Appraisal District	\$50,410,870	\$49,294,620		\$99,705,490
Waller	Waller County Appraisal District	\$446,730	\$446,870	\$152,240	\$1,045,840
Ward	Ward County Appraisal District				not stated
Washington	Washington County Appraisal District	\$11,622,560	\$8,169,070	\$3,281,580	\$23,073,210
Webb	Webb County Appraisal District	\$37,559,640	\$36,826,740	\$3,900,000	\$113,426,380
Wharton	Central Appraisal District of Wharton County	\$3,613,360	\$2,529,567	\$3,641,852	\$9,784,779
Wheeler	Wheeler County Appraisal District	\$47,079,540	\$64,427,810	\$93,698,460	\$205,205,810
Winkler	Winkler County Appraisal District	\$2,416,780	\$1,939,010	\$2,118,130	\$6,473,920
Wise	Wise County Appraisal District	\$46,717,600	\$41,304,740	\$42,682,400	\$130,704,740
Wood	Wood County Appraisal District	\$851,100	\$848,210	\$299,120	\$1,998,430
Young	Young County Appraisal District	\$49,720.00	\$46,330.00	\$47,460.00	\$143,510.00
Zapata	Zapata County Appraisal District	\$9,730,130	\$19,320,770	\$4,605,710	\$33,656,610

TOTAL: \$ 2,470,682,460



January 14, 2015

Chairman
Commissioner
Bobbie Mitchell
Denton County

To: Urban Counties Policy Committee

From: John B. Dahill, General Counsel

Re: **Raising the Age of Criminal Responsibility to 18**

Chair Elect
Judge
Veronica Escobar
El Paso County

Background:

Immediate Past Chair
Commissioner
Eddie Arnold
Jefferson County

Bills have been filed to raise the age of criminal responsibility from 17 to 18. See HB 53 (McClendon), HB 330 (Wu), and SB 104 (Hinojosa).

Texas is one of 11 states in which a person becomes an adult for purposes of facing criminal charges at 17 years old. All other states have set the age at 18.

Vice-Chairmen

Tim Brown
Bell County
Judge Ed Emmett
Harris County
Comm. Fred Nardini
San Patricio County
Judge Glen Whitley
Tarrant County
Judge Dan Gattis
Williamson County
Comm. Kevin Burns
Wise County

Raising the age to 18 will result in more cases – and higher costs – in the juvenile justice system, but it will also result in fewer adult cases. Further, raising the age will reduce the costs of compliance with the Prison Rape Elimination Act (PREA). Although county jails are not required to comply with PREA, county jails cannot receive or keep accreditation without complying. PREA requires that inmates younger than 18 be separated from the adult population by sight and sound.

On March 25, 2014, the Criminal Jurisprudence Committee held a hearing on this issue. The overwhelming sentiment from juvenile advocates, prosecutors, and judges was that raising the age to 18 was a good idea. However, almost all witnesses warned the Committee of additional costs that will be borne by juvenile probation departments. Included in those additional costs will be detention costs, as well as the necessity of developing programs specifically for an older population, such as independent living skills.

Executive Director
Donald Lee

Recommended Resolution

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Ector ~ El Paso
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Grayson ~ Gregg
Guadalupe ~ Harris
Hays ~ Hidalgo
Jefferson ~ Johnson
Kaufman ~ Lubbock
McLennan ~ Midland
Nueces ~ Potter
Randall ~ Rockwall
San Patricio ~ Smith
Tarrant ~ Travis
Webb ~ Williamson
Wise

RESOLVED by the Texas Conference of Urban Counties Policy Committee that the Juvenile and Criminal Justice Section of the Policy Platform is amended as follows:

Support additional state funding for juvenile probation departments necessitated by raising the age of criminal responsibility to 18.

500 West 13th Street
Austin, TX 78701

Phone: 512.476.6174
Fax: 512.476.5122
www.cuc.org



January 14, 2015

Chairman
Commissioner
Bobbie Mitchell
Denton County

To: Urban Counties Policy Committee

From: John B. Dahill, General Counsel

Chair Elect
Judge
Veronica Escobar
El Paso County

Re: **Authority to Regulate Weapons on County Premises**

Background:

Immediate Past Chair
Commissioner
Eddie Arnold
Jefferson County

A constitutional amendment has been proposed that would delete current language vesting the Texas Legislature with the authority to regulate the wearing of arms. The end result of HJR 56 (James White) is that there could be no restrictions on the carrying of arms.

Vice-Chairmen

While this measure is extreme, other bills have been filed dealing with expanding the ability of Texans to carry firearms, either with or without a permit, and either openly or concealed.

Tim Brown
Bell County
Judge Ed Emmett
Harris County
Comm. Fred Nardini
San Patricio County
Judge Glen Whitley
Tarrant County
Judge Dan Gattis
Williamson County
Comm. Kevin Burns
Wise County

Counties currently may prohibit concealed carry holders and others from bringing weapons into county buildings.

Recommended Resolution

RESOLVED by the Texas Conference of Urban Counties Policy Committee that the Revenue, Budget, and Miscellaneous Section of the Policy Platform is amended as follows:

Support current county authority to regulate the carrying of weapons on county premises.

Executive Director
Donald Lee

Member Counties

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Fax: 512.476.5122
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To: Urban Counties Policy Committee
From: John B. Dahill, General Counsel
Re: **Electronic Publication of Public Notices**

Background:

HB 139 (Stickland) would require all public notices a political subdivision is required to publish in a newspaper of general circulation also be provided to the Comptroller for posting on the Comptroller's website. The Comptroller will be required to establish a website that includes e-mail alerts upon request for notification of a category of notices. The bill would also permit (but not require) a political subdivision to discontinue publishing items in newspapers.

By providing notices to the Comptroller and eliminating local print publication, counties can save money and, according to some, reach broader audiences. Newspapers have traditionally opposed similar legislation, arguing eliminating print publication reduces government transparency.

Recommended Resolution:

RESOLVED by the Texas Conference of Urban Counties Policy Committee that the the Revenue, Budget, and Miscellaneous Section of the Policy Platform to read as follows:

Support legislation that permits counties to post public notices electronically in lieu of print publication.



January 14, 2015

Chairman
Commissioner
Bobbie Mitchell
Denton County

To: Urban Counties Policy Committee

From: John B. Dahill, General Counsel

Re: **Penalties for Enforcement of Federal Laws and Regulations**

Chair Elect
Judge
Veronica Escobar
El Paso County

Background:

Immediate Past Chair
Commissioner
Eddie Arnold
Jefferson County

Bills have been filed that propose to penalize a county if the county adopts a policy permitting or prohibiting the enforcement of particular federal laws or regulations, or if the county, by consistent actions, permits or prohibits the enforcement of such federal laws or regulations. Examples include:

Vice-Chairmen

Tim Brown
Bell County
Judge Ed Emmett
Harris County
Comm. Fred Nardini
San Patricio County
Judge Glen Whitley
Tarrant County
Judge Dan Gattis
Williamson County
Comm. Kevin Burns
Wise County

HB 422 by Krause – Prohibits governmental entities, officials, and employees from enforcing any federal firearms laws that impose restrictions not existing in Texas law. No state grant funds may be given to any political subdivision that adopts a policy or by consistent actions requires enforcement of such firearms laws.

SB 185 by Perry – Political subdivisions may not prohibit enforcement of state or federal immigration laws. No state grant funds may be given to any political subdivision that adopts a policy or by consistent actions prohibits enforcement of such immigration laws.

Of course, a county commissioners court has no control over the actions of the various elected law enforcement officers in the county. Therefore, subjecting the entire county to penalties for the actions of one elected official is unreasonably punitive.

Executive Director
Donald Lee

We recognize that member counties may disagree on the substance of the various bills containing these punitive provisions. Therefore, we are recommending a policy position that addresses only the punitive provisions, and that permits member counties to adopt varying positions regarding the underlying subjects of the bills.

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McLennan ~ Midland
Nueces ~ Potter
Randall ~ Rockwall
San Patricio ~ Smith
Tarrant ~ Travis
Webb ~ Williamson
Wise

Recommended Resolution

RESOLVED by the Texas Conference of Urban Counties Policy Committee that the Revenue, Budget, and Miscellaneous Section of the Policy Platform is amended as follows:

Oppose any statutory provisions that would financially punish a county for actions other than those of the county's commissioners court.

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January 14, 2015

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Jefferson County

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Member Counties

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To: Urban Counties Policy Committee

From: John B. Dahill, General Counsel

Re: **Adding Religious Freedom Restoration to Constitution**

Background:

HJR 55 (Villalba) and SJR 10 (Campbell) propose to amend the Constitution to prohibit any burden of a person's free exercise of religion by a governmental entity unless the burden is (1) necessary to further a compelling governmental interest; and (2) the least restrictive means of furthering the interest. In the case of SJR 10, "burden" includes indirect burdens such as withholding benefits, assessing penalties, and denying access to facilities and programs.

These joint resolutions seek to place into the Texas Constitution provisions of the Texas Religious Freedom Restoration Act (TRFRA), Chapter 110, Texas Civil Practice and Remedies Code. The TRFRA, passed in 1999, was carefully crafted to balance religious freedom with the state's interests, including the management of prison and jail facilities. The TRFRA applies to substantial burdens of religious beliefs, but the proposed amendments would apply to any burden, including frivolous, incidental burdens. Here are some examples of Texas legislative actions that burden people's free exercise of religion:

- In 2006 and 2007, the legislature passed bills which made it a criminal offense for someone to protest a funeral within 1,000 feet of a cemetery and prohibiting protests within three hours of a funeral (in order address the despicable conduct of Westboro Baptist Church members at funerals for military personnel);
- health departments permit restaurants to keep dairy products in the same refrigerators as meat products, creating a burden for any restaurant worker who keeps kosher;
- the Education Code requires compulsory school attendance through age 17, infringing on many religions that hold girls should not be educated; and
- the Penal Code prohibits carrying daggers and blades over 5 ½ inches in length, impinging on the practice of Sikhs who carry Kirpans (swords or daggers) at all times.

In the prison / jail context, there are many operational decisions that likely infringe upon religious beliefs. Those decisions involve meal selection, library content and availability, "lights out" requirements, visitation hours, and the ability to pray how, when, and where an inmate may desire. Requiring

cities, counties, and the state to show a compelling governmental interest to support each of these operational decisions will result in substantial litigation, and likely require changes in operating procedures that may decrease safety and increase costs to taxpayers.

Recommended Resolution

RESOLVED by the Texas Conference of Urban Counties Policy Committee that the Revenue, Budget, and Miscellaneous Section of the Policy Platform is amended as follows:

Oppose amending the State Constitution to protect religious rights unless governmental entities are not subject to new liability for actions resulting in insubstantial burdens on a person's exercise of those rights.

Eric Wilkinson, KING 5 News 8:28 a.m. PDT October 23, 2014

AUBURN, Wash. -- Like all religions, the Sikh faith is steeped in tradition. One of the most revered is the carrying of a Kirpan, a sword or dagger, at all times.

"People will even wear it in the shower. It's kind of hard for others to understand," said Jaswinder Singh, spokesman for the Gurudwara Sikh Center of Seattle.

The concept of the Kirpan is taught to children at an early age. The dagger is considered an instrument of social justice.

"For the people who are formally initiated to the Kirpan, it's very near and dear," said Singh.

But is it appropriate to bring to school?

A few weeks ago at Auburn's Gildo Rey Elementary, a Sikh family approached the school telling them their little boy would be carrying a Kirpan every day.

That didn't sit well with some.

One school volunteer named Shelby, who asked her last name not be used, said respecting religion goes too far if it compromises student safety.

"There's no way I'd go back until the knife was gone," she said.

Shelby does not volunteer at Gildo Rey.

"They can't take that thing into the airport. TSA would be all over it. Why is a school any different?" she asked.

District administrators are citing state and federal guidelines that allow certain exceptions to Washington's "zero tolerance" for weapons policy.

They say there are plenty of Sikhs, both students and staff, who have carried Kirpans to school for years without incident.

In this case, the knife is to be kept under the child's clothes at all times.

"The knife can't come out. It can't be shown around. It needs to be underneath their clothing," said Auburn Assistant Superintendent of Schools Ryan Foster. "That allows them to express their religion without jeopardizing anyone's feeling of safety. If there are any problems, we will take it to the family, but we don't expect any."

January 14, 2015

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Denton County

Chair Elect

Judge
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El Paso County

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500 West 13th Street
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Phone: 512.476.6174

Fax: 512.476.5122

www.cuc.org

To: Urban Counties Policy Committee

From: Michael Vasquez, Program Manager

Re: **Discussion of Legislation to Reduce or End Highway Fund
Diversions**

Background:

Several bills and constitutional amendments have been filed proposing to end significant diversions from the state highway fund.

- Constitutional amendment to freeze diversions from the highway fund at the current level and then ratchet them down by 20% whenever the state revenue estimate is three times the amount of the reduction.
 - HJR 27 by Pickett
- Constitutional amendment to remove the diversion of state highway funds to DPS for “policing” public roadways starting in 2017.
 - HJR 28 and HJR 29 by Pickett (duplicates)
- Constitutional amendment and enacting language to remove the diversion of state highway funds to DPS for “policing” public roadways starting in 2017.
 - SB 139/SJR 12 by Perry
 - SB 184/SJR 15 by Schwertner

The Transportation Section of the Urban Counties Policy Platform contains an item specific to diversion of funds for DPS and to SOAH. Since there are several ideas to either reduce or eliminate diversions it is recommended that the committee consider this language providing a more general statement of support.

Recommended Resolution

RESOLVED by the Texas Conference of Urban Counties Policy Committee that the Transportation section of the Policy Platform be amended as follows:

Support the reduction, or if possible, the elimination of diversions from the State Highway Fund.

~~[Support a state budget that ends diversions of highway funds to state agencies such as DPS and SOAH.]~~

January 14, 2015

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To: Urban Counties Policy Committee

From: Michael Vasquez, Program Manager

Re: **Discussion and Consideration of Support for Local LIRAP Administration**

Background:

Urban Counties staff recently participated in discussions with Representative Isaac regarding various Clean Air Act issues.

At one point it was suggested that it might be possible to deal with concerns about the underfunding of the Low Income Repair and Replacement Assistance Program (LIRAP) program by keeping the funds locally in each county to fund LIRAP and LIP programs instead of depositing them into the Clean Air Fund. This would avoid the issue of the legislature not appropriating the funds in order to certify the state budget.

TCEQ would have some administrative costs for oversight of the program and collecting statewide data on the programs that would need to be addressed, but it should not be a major issue.

We will continue to work with Representative Isaac's office to see what legislation could be crafted to address the issue.

LIRAP revenue comes from a \$6 fee (\$2 in Travis and Williamson counties) as part of the vehicle emissions test fee.

The estimated LIRAP revenue for 2014 is anticipated to be around \$42 million, but for the current biennium the legislature appropriated just \$7 million per year for LIRAP and \$625,000 per year for local initiative projects.

Recommended Resolution:

RESOLVED by the Texas Conference of Urban Counties Policy Committee that the Clean Air Act section of the Policy Platform is amended as follows:

Support local administration of the LIRAP and LIP programs to ensure funds collected in the county are used in the county.



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To: Urban Counties Policy Committee

From: Michael Vasquez, Program Manager

Re: **Discussion Regarding Draft Recommendations for TERP Funding and Improvements**

Background:

Urban Counties staff is currently participating in a Texas Emissions Reduction Plan (TERP) stakeholders group (essentially a subset of the Texas Clean Air Working Group) to support full funding of TERP and suggest improvements to the program. The group is also working to generate educational documents to bring new legislators and their staff up to speed on the history and significance of TERP.

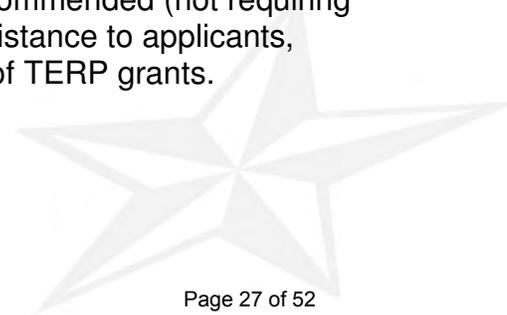
Representative Isaac will be hosting an education event at the Capitol to educate new members and their staff on January 22, 2015 at 9:00am in the Capitol Extension (Room E1.010). Interested stakeholders are invited to attend.

Some of the draft proposals that are being considered as recommendations to the legislature:

- Fully fund TERP and LIRAP.
- Allow TCEQ to make oil and gas exploration machinery in counties located in shale areas eligible for TERP grants even if the county is not an affected county.
- Allow the Railroad Commission, COGs and MPOs to assist applicants for the Texas Natural Gas Vehicle Grant program (currently only dealers may provide assistance).
- Allow TCEQ to reduce the size of a fleet (75 vehicles or more) that is eligible for the Clean Fleet Program.
- Allow TCEQ to combine the Natural Gas Vehicle and Clean fleet programs to allow an applicant to apply for both with one application.
- Make LIRAP a county program, with TCEQ oversight, but funds are collected and spent by the county.
- A number of administrative changes will be recommended (not requiring legislation) to simplify applications, provide assistance to applicants, and provide more promotion of the availability of TERP grants.

Recommended Resolution:

None.



January 14, 2015

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To: Urban Counties Policy Committee

From: Windy Johnson, Program Manager

Re: **Collin County Legislative Platform**

Included below are proposals that will be pursued by Collin County in the next legislative session. Collin County has asked to discuss the items with the Urban Counties Policy Committee and request support where needed.

1. End the reliance and utilization of dedicated revenues to balance the state funds to certify the State budget.

Recommended Resolution:

RESOLVED by the Texas Conference of Urban Counties Policy Committee that the Juvenile and Criminal Justice Section of the Policy Platform is amended as follows:

~~[Support restoration of dedicated funds to their original purposes.]~~

Recommended Resolution:

RESOLVED by the Texas Conference of Urban Counties Policy Committee that the the Principles Section of the Policy Platform is amended as follows:

Urban Counties believes that funds collected for a purpose should be used for that purpose and supports ending the reliance and utilization of dedicated revenues to balance the State budget.

2. Provide commissioners court authority to recover costs to offset the impact of utility construction that crosses county roads.

Recommended Resolution:

RESOLVED by the Texas Conference of Urban Counties Policy Committee that the Support Section of the Policy Platform is amended as follows:

Utility Construction Impact. Support granting authority to commissioners court to recover costs incurred from utility construction that crosses county roads. Collin County

3. Provide counties with the ability to adopt and enforce a noise ordinance in the same manner as cities.

Recommended Resolution:

RESOLVED by the Texas Conference of Urban Counties Policy Committee that the Support Section of the Policy Platform is amended as follows:

Noise Ordinance. Support providing counties with the ability to adopt and enforce a noise ordinance in the same manner as cities. Collin County

4. Support adequately funding the cost for visiting judges in the state district courts.

Recommended Resolution:

RESOLVED by the Texas Conference of Urban Counties Policy Committee that the Support Section of the Policy Platform is amended as follows:

Visiting Judges Salary. Support a requirement that judicial salary saved due to a judicial vacancy inures to the benefit of the county where the vacancy occurs to be used to fund visiting judges. *Collin County*

5. Support the use of electronic court reporting for all newly created courts.

Recommended Resolution:

RESOLVED by the Texas Conference of Urban Counties Policy Committee that the Support Section of the Policy Platform is amended as follows:

Electronic Court Reporting. Support a requirement that electronic court reporting be used for all newly created courts. *Collin County*

6. Support expansion of a bracket to allow the Collin County Sheriff or a deputy to enforce TxDOT regulations for commercial vehicles.

Recommended Resolution:

RESOLVED by the Texas Conference of Urban Counties Policy Committee that the Support Section of the Policy Platform is amended as follows:

Commercial Vehicle Standards Enforcement. Support expanding the bracket to include Collin County in the counties that can enforce TxDOT regulations for commercial vehicles. *Collin County*

7. Support allowing a repeat DWI offender to get an occupational drivers license for work and treatment.

Recommended Resolution:

RESOLVED by the Texas Conference of Urban Counties Policy Committee that the Support Section of the Policy Platform is amended as follows:

Occupational Licenses. Support allowing repeat DWI offenders to get occupational drivers licenses for work and treatment. *Collin County*

8. Support allowing for the write off of bad debt for court collections.

Recommended Resolution:

RESOLVED by the Texas Conference of Urban Counties Policy Committee that the Support Section of the Policy Platform is amended as follows:

Bad Debt. Support granting counties authority to write off as bad debt uncollectable fees, fines and costs of courts. *Collin County*

January 14, 2015

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To: Urban Counties Policy Committee

From: Windy Johnson, Program Manager

Re: **Hidalgo County Legislative Platform**

Included below are proposals that will be pursued by Hidalgo County in the next legislative session. Hidalgo County has asked to discuss the items with the Urban Counties Policy Committee and request support where needed.

1. Support broadening the counties authority for advertising, including online advertising.

Recommended Resolution:

RESOLVED by the Texas Conference of Urban Counties Policy Committee that the Support Section of the Policy Platform is amended as follows:

County Advertising Authority. Support leasing advertising space on county real and personal property. *Hidalgo County*

2. Amend the law to allow the county to go to a JP for an injunction for contempt of the "one single family dwelling per lot" rule.

Recommended Resolution:

RESOLVED by the Texas Conference of Urban Counties Policy Committee that the Support Section of the Policy Platform is amended as follows:

Single Family Injunction. Support allowing a JP to enforce the "one single family dwelling per lot" rule. *Hidalgo County.*

3. Allow commissioners court to exempt land donated for public use from platting requirements.

Recommended Resolution:

RESOLVED by the Texas Conference of Urban Counties Policy Committee that the Support Section of the Policy Platform is amended as follows:

Donated Land. Support the authority of commissioners court to exempt from platting requirements land donated for public use. *Hidalgo County.*

January 14, 2015

Chairman
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Bobbie Mitchell
Denton County

To: Urban Counties Policy Committee

From: Michael Vasquez, Program Manager

Chair Elect
Judge
Veronica Escobar
El Paso County

Re: **Reconsider a Request for Support for a Deposit on Beverage Containers**

Immediate Past Chair

Commissioner
Eddie Arnold
Jefferson County

Background:

At the last Policy Committee meeting, a proposed item on beverage container deposits was held back due to a request for more information on similar programs in other states.

Vice-Chairmen

Tim Brown
Bell County

According to a report prepared earlier this year for the Texas League of Conservation Voters, ten states have implemented beverage container deposit refund systems (BCDRS).

Judge Ed Emmett
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Tarrant County

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State	Deposit	Redemption Rate	Unclaimed Deposit Revenue
California	5 cents	84%	\$200 million
Connecticut	5 cents	70%	\$23 million
Hawaii	5 cents	79%	\$21.5 million
Iowa	5 cents	86%	\$23 million
Massachusetts	5 cents	71%	\$39.2 million
Maine	5 cents	90%	\$1.2 million
Michigan	10 cents	97%	\$12 million
New York	5 cents	67%	\$120 million
Oregon	5 cents	75%	\$16 million
Vermont	5 cents	85%	\$2 million

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Nationwide, beverage containers makeup between 4.4 and 21 percent of the litter stream, and studies have indicated that a beverage container deposit program is the most effective method for reducing litter.

Recycling also reduces the need for virgin glass, aluminum, and plastic, leading to reduced energy use. For example making a new can from recycled materials takes 95% less energy than using non-recycled materials. It also removes significant wasted resources from landfills.

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Under the Texas proposal, deposits will be sent to the Recycling Refund Trust account, managed by a consortium made up of stakeholder representatives appointed by the Governor. Unclaimed refunds will be used for reimbursement to redemption/recycling centers, administrative costs, education efforts, and to provide matching grants or low interest loans for water quality and waste reduction/recycling and redemption programs.

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Local governments or independent entities are authorized to establish and operate redemption centers subject to approval by the consortium. Curbside recycling or redemption centers will be reimbursed by the consortium and will receive a handling fee for each beverage container it redeems or recycles.

In 2010, the Urban Counties voted to support a proposal to impose a beverage container deposit to fund and encourage recycling and clean-up efforts. The legislation did not pass.

Recently, Texas for Clean Water has asked the Urban Counties to again support legislation to impose a 5 or 10 cent refundable deposit on beverage containers.

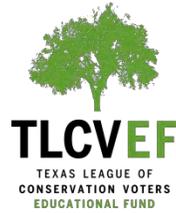
Recommended Resolution:

RESOLVED by the Texas Conference of Urban Counties Policy Committee that the Support Section of the Policy Platform is amended as follows:

Bottle Deposit. Support a refundable deposit on beverage containers to reduce litter and fund cleanup efforts. *Texas for Clean Water*

The Potential Economic Impact of a Texas Beverage Container Deposit Refund System

prepared for

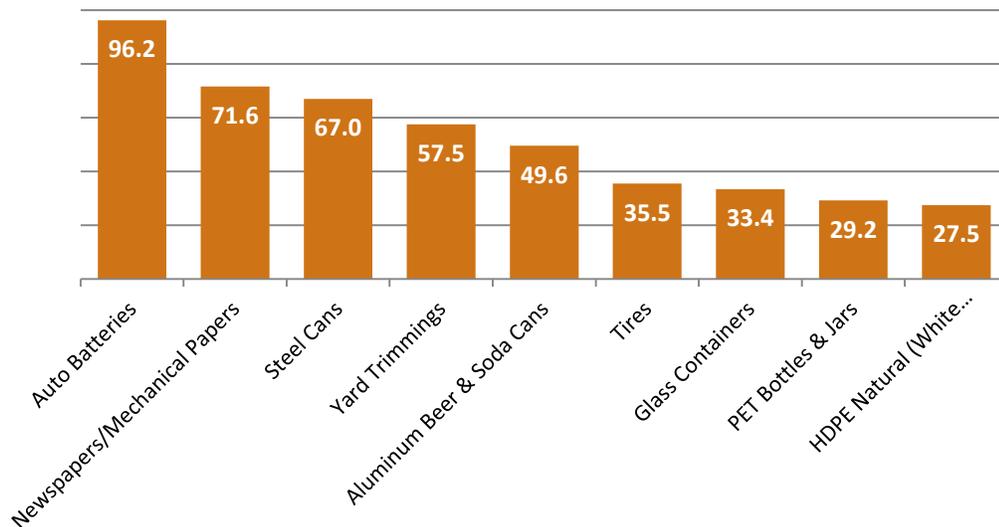


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Overview

The popularity of and need for recycling has increased significantly in recent years. Numerous organizations and municipalities across the country have spent thousands of hours and millions of dollars on efforts to increase recycling rates, and, in fact, rates have steadily risen since 1960. In 2010, Americans generated about 250 million tons of trash and recycled and composted over 85 million tons of this material, equivalent to a 34.1 percent recycling rate. According to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, this provided an annual benefit of more than 186 million metric tons of carbon dioxide equivalent emissions reduced, comparable to the annual emissions from over 36 million passenger vehicles.¹ The figure below shows recycling rates of certain products as of 2010.

Figure 1: Recycling Percentage Rates of Selected Products, 2010



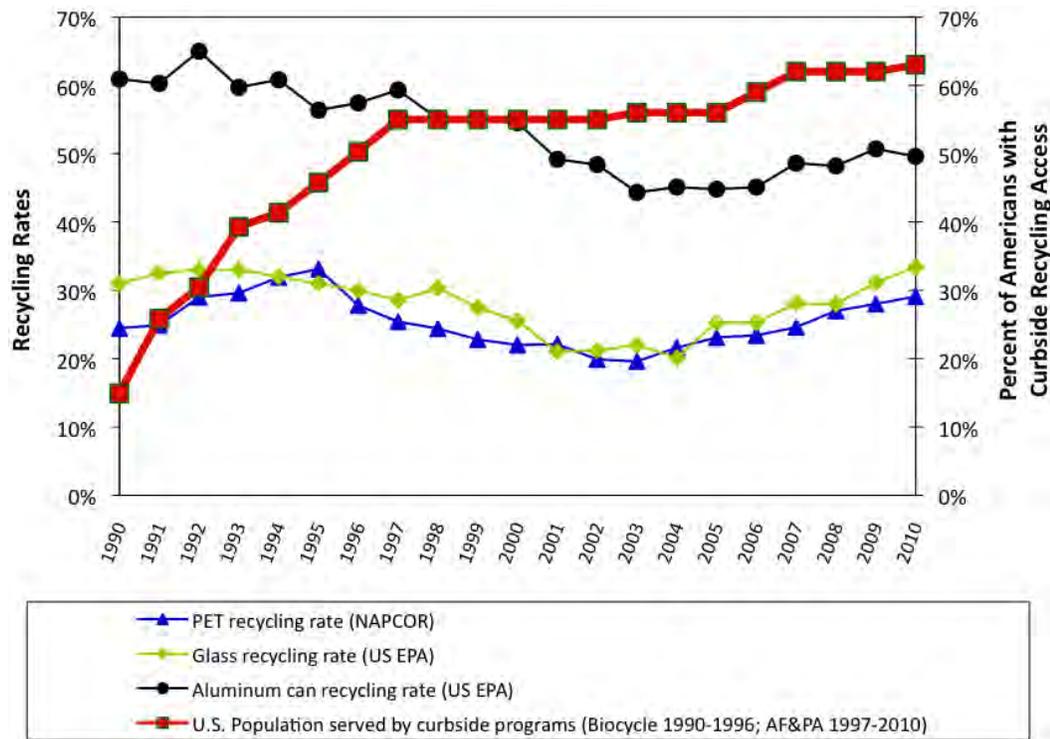
Source: U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

In addition to the environmental implications, recycling is also an important element of domestic production. United States manufacturers—particularly manufacturers of energy-intensive and trade-exposed products such as glass, plastic, paper, aluminum and steel—need access to recycled materials in order to retain competitive advantages, particularly energy savings, that result from a lesser reliance on virgin or raw materials. Some industries and some recycling systems are succeeding in this regard; others need substantial improvement.

¹ United States Environmental Protection Agency (2010). *Facts and Figures for 2010*. Accessed from http://www.epa.gov/epawaste/nonhaz/municipal/pubs/msw_2010_rev_factsheet.pdf

Recycling is clearly only as good as participation rates and the quality of the recycled material. Unfortunately, as shown in the figure above, many beverage containers do not get recycled. The rise in popularity of curbside recycling has not resulted in a similar rise in beverage container recycling. The figure below compares national curbside recycling access and beverage container recycling rates for a twenty year period.

Figure 2: Comparing Curbside Recycling Access and Beverage Container Recycling Rates (1990-2010)



Source: Container Recycling Institute

The simple fact is that many beverages are consumed and discarded away from home where recycling services are not available. According to the Container Recycling Institute, 50-70% of beverages are consumed in households, and the remaining 30-50% are consumed away from home – at bars, restaurants, offices, parks, educational institutions, and on-the-go. Also, many multi-family residences, which comprise about one-third of U.S. housing, do not offer curbside recycling.² As illustration, citizens in Florida consume 36 million sodas and other

² Container Recycling Institute (July, 2012). *Curbside Recycling Access Rates and Beverage Container Recycling*. Accessed on 8-16-12 at www.container-recycling.org.

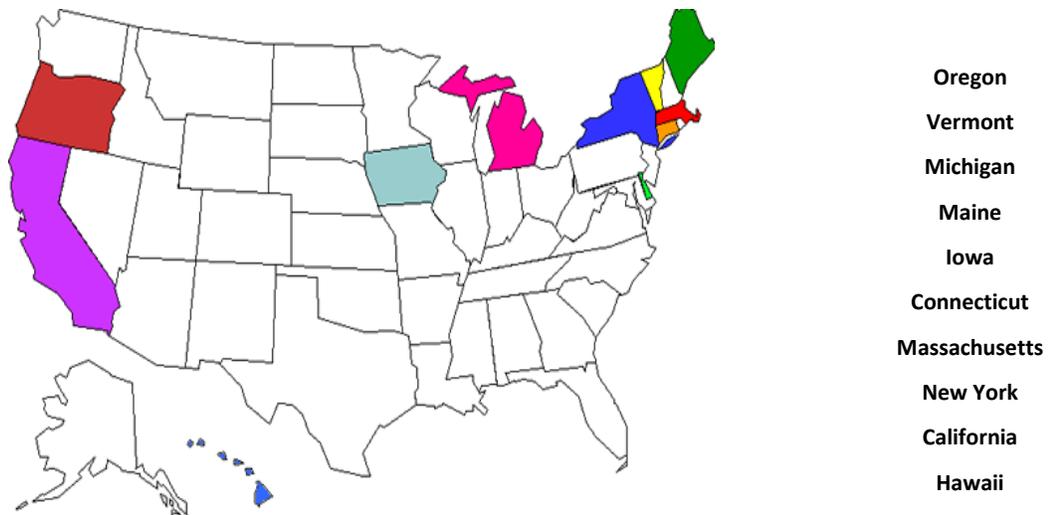
beverages on a daily basis, but only 6 million of the containers get recycled. The other 30 million either wind up in a landfill or as litter.³

One solution proposed by recycling advocates is a beverage container deposit refund system (BCDRS). Rather than mandating recycling, a BCDRS rewards people for returning empty beverage containers to be reused. Consumers pay a deposit at the time of sale (5 cents, for example) and return the empty container to a designated collection site for a refund. A BCDRS creates a financial incentive to recycle, and discourages litter and waste. The following is a description of how a proposed Texas system would work:

The retailer pays the distributor a nickel for each beverage bottle/can the retailer purchases. The distributor passes that nickel to a Deposit Fund. The consumer pays the retailer a nickel per container at point of purchase. When the consumer returns the empty beverage container to a redemption center, a reverse vending machine, or other recycling facility, the deposit is refunded to the consumer. The redemption center owner or recycler refunds the deposit to the consumer. The redemption center owner will receive a small handling fee, and also keep the scrap value of the aluminum, glass, and plastic materials sold to the individual markets. This closely parallels the successful Hawaii system, implemented in 2005.

These systems have been adopted by ten states representing a third of the nation's population. The average redemption rate in states with existing programs is 80%.

Figure 3: U.S. States with Beverage Container Deposit Laws



Source: Bottle Bill Resource Guide, <http://www.bottlebill.org/about/whatis.htm>

³ Dewey, Jim; Denslow, Dave; Chavez, Belen; Romero, Henrique; and Holt, Lynne (March 15, 2011). *Analysis of a Florida Beverage Container Deposit Refund System*. Economic Analysis Program of the Bureau of Economic and Business Research, University of Florida.

Revenue from unredeemed containers can reach in the tens of millions of dollars, and in most cases, these unclaimed funds that revert to the state are added to the general fund or are used to cover programmatic expenses. The table below shows redemption rates and unclaimed deposit revenue in the 10 states with existing programs.⁴ For a more complete description of each state’s program, please see Appendix B.

Table 1: Redemption Rates and Unclaimed Deposit Revenue in Existing States

State	Deposit Amount	Redemption Rate	Unclaimed Deposit Revenue
California ¹	5 cents	84%	\$200 million
Connecticut	5 cents	70%	\$23 million
Hawaii ² (2009)	5 cents	79%	\$21.5 million
Iowa	5 cents	86%	\$23 million
Massachusetts	5 cents	71%	\$39.2 million
Maine ³	5 cents	90%	\$1.2 million
Michigan	10 cents	97%	\$12 million
New York	5 cents	67%	\$120 million
Oregon ⁴	5 cents	75%	\$16 million
Vermont ⁵	5 cents	85%	\$2 million

Source: The Abell Report, Volume 25, Number 2 (March, 2012)

1. 10 cents for bottles over 24 oz. 2. Plus 1 cent to 1.5 cents nonrefundable fee. 3. 15 cents for some wine bottles. 4. Reverts to distributors; Oregon Department of Environmental Quality estimate. 5. 15 cents for some liquor bottles.

Estimating the Impact of a Texas BCDRS

In light of the above, Texas Perspectives, Inc. (TXP) was retained to assist in evaluating the current and potential economic impact of implementing a BCDRS in Texas. The first step in the process was to develop a pro forma that outlined assumptions on the size of the overall Texas beverage market, the volume of recycling that would occur over time as the BCDRS is implemented and administered, the revenue that would accrue once handling fees to the redemption center owners and other admin costs are recovered, and the commodity values associated with containers that are actually recycled. The following provides more detail on these underlying assumptions.

⁴ The Abell Foundation (March, 2012). *Uncapping the Pros and Cons of a Bottle Deposit Program*. The Abell Report, Volume 25, Number 2.

Key Assumptions

- Estimates of annual beverages consumed, assumed recycling rates, value of scrap.
 - The average Texan consumes a total of 643 beverage containers per year; 365 aluminum, 112 glass, and 166 plastic.
 - The value of scrap varies by commodity (aluminum is most valuable); the average approximately \$575/ton.
- Recycling rates are assumed to grow from a current value of about one-third to 77% over a ten year period. The rate of recycling varies by commodity (higher for aluminum); for forecasting purposes, growth is assumed to be linear.
- Revenue to the redemption center owners is the combination of the handling fee per container (\$.015) and the scrap value of the recycled materials.
- Direct redemption center revenue grows from \$172.6m in Year One to \$391.9m in Year Ten, while direct jobs rise from just over 1,000 to 2,375.⁵
- Slightly less than 60% of the revenue comes from the commodity value of the scrap.

Possible Adjustments

One potential impact with implementation of a beverage container law is distorting consumer choices related to beverage consumption, due to effective price changes. However, changes in beverage consumption will almost certainly be very small (essentially nothing) for four related reasons. First, even if prices rise by slightly more than the amount of the deposit, that still represents a small percentage increase in price. Second, all available empirical evidence suggests consumption responses to beverage price changes are, proportionally, much smaller than the price change—only about one third as large. But, third, all beverage prices will increase by a similar amount. Increases in the prices of beer, bottled water, tea, and energy drinks will boost the demand for soft drinks, for the most part canceling the decrease in quantity demanded due to the increase in the price of soft drinks. Basically, the price of almost all readily substitutable container beverages will go up, so individuals cannot avoid the price increase on one type by switching to another type, and they will not respond to the overall price increase by drinking significantly less in total. Finally, the variance in the market of the unit cost per beverage has been shown to be greater than the potential impact of the deposit, reinforcing the point that a healthy market can accommodate a range of prices for the same good.

These issues arose as Massachusetts was recently contemplating updating their Bottle Deposit Law (BDL), implemented in 1983, that placed a five cent deposit on all carbonated soft drinks, beer, malt beverages and sparkling water sold in Massachusetts with the assurance that consumers can redeem their empty beverage containers for a nickel.

⁵ It should be noted that the jobs estimate, which was derived from Census data on firm structure within the recycling industry, was validated by a separate methodology developed by the Container Recycling Institute that relied on survey data to create a jobs/1,000 tons recycled ratio.

According to the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection⁶:

Since the passage of this successful law, the marketplace has diversified and now includes additional beverage products that are not covered by the deposit. In order to address these changes in consumer preferences for bottled beverages, Governor Deval Patrick and Lieutenant Governor Tim Murray, almost 200 municipalities, and numerous legislators have supported an amendment to the BDL to include non-carbonated products such as water, flavored water, coffee-based drinks, juices, teas and sports drinks. Opponents argue that an update of the BDL will increase consumer and retailer costs, reduce consumer choice and impose significant new burdens on retailers. In fact, in a December 10th, 2010 letter, opponents predicted that the updated bottle bill will cost \$116 million per year and increase the cost of each beverage by approximately five cents (above the refundable deposit).

The information gathered in a survey of beverage prices and retailers in Massachusetts and adjacent states attempts to “address a variety of issues raised by opponents of an updated BDL, specifically claims of increased product pricing, decreased product availability and increased retailer and consumer inconvenience and cost.”

Findings suggest:

- The BDL results in no differences in prices of identical beverages from deposit states to non-deposit states;
- The BDL results in no difference in consumer choice; and
- Sufficient infrastructure and capacity exists to handle the additional beverage containers of an updated BDL.

Massachusetts’ results validate the finding that there likely would be no measurable effect on consumer behavior, and therefore no offset on the economic impact findings is reported here.

Calculation of the Economic Impact

The second step in the process is to translate the assumptions from the pro forma into an input-output model of the Texas economy that allows measurement of the secondary, or “ripple” effects. In an input-output analysis of new economic activity, it is useful to distinguish three types of expenditure effects: direct, indirect, and induced. Direct effects are production changes associated with the immediate effects or final demand changes. The payment made by an out-of-town visitor to a hotel operator is an example of a direct effect, as would be the taxi fare that visitor paid to be transported into town from the airport.

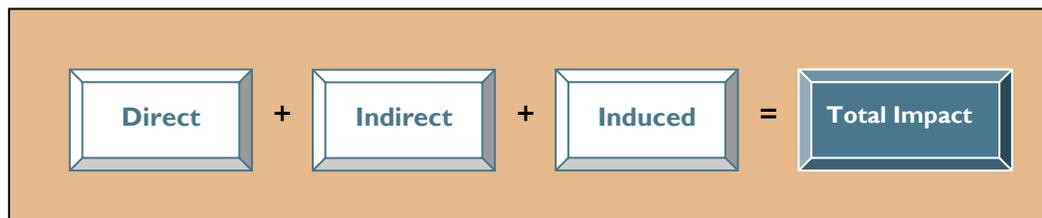
⁶ *Comparison of Beverage Pricing, Consumer Choice and Redemption System Performance in Massachusetts and Neighboring States.* The Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection July 2011

Indirect effects are production changes in backward-linked industries caused by the changing input needs of directly affected industries – typically, additional purchases to produce additional output. Satisfying the demand for an overnight stay will require the hotel operator to purchase additional cleaning supplies and services, for example, and the taxi driver will have to replace the gasoline consumed during the trip from the airport. These downstream purchases affect the economic status of other local merchants and workers.

Induced effects are the changes in regional household spending patterns caused by changes in household income generated from the direct and indirect effects. Both the hotel operator and taxi driver experience increased income from the visitor’s stay, for example, as do the cleaning supplies outlet and the gas station proprietor. Induced effects capture the way in which this increased income is in turn spent in the local economy.

Once the ripple effects have been calculated, the results can be expressed in a number of ways. Four of the most common are “Output,” equivalent to sales; “Value-Added,” which is the difference between sales and cost of goods sold; “Earnings,” which represents the compensation to employees and proprietors; and “Employment,” which refers to permanent, full-time jobs that have been created in the local economy. The interdependence between different sectors of the economy is reflected in the concept of a “multiplier.” An output multiplier, for example, divides the total (direct, indirect and induced) effects of an initial spending injection by the value of that injection – i.e., the direct effect. The higher the multiplier, the greater the interdependence among different sectors of the economy. An output multiplier of 1.4, for example, means that for every \$1,000 injected into the economy, another \$400 in output is produced in all sectors.

Figure 4: The Flow of Economic Impacts



Economic Impact Findings

The impact of the introduction of a beverage container recycling program in Texas could be significant. The combination of the handling fee and value of the scrap ultimately will yield 2,375 full-time equivalent (FTE) jobs, producing over \$391 million (\$2012) in direct annual economic activity. When the ripple effects are factored in, the impact rises to a total annual economic impact of about \$850 million (\$2012) in total economic activity, over \$225 million in total earnings, and 5,300 FTE jobs. Meanwhile, the Comptroller's Office uses a "rule of thumb" that estimates total State revenue as being equivalent to 5 percent of personal income (earnings). Based on that ratio, State revenue due to new economic activity stimulated by the program would exceed \$11 million (\$2012) annually. See the table below for overall results, and Appendix A for more detail.

Table 2: Summary Annual Economic Impact Results (\$2012)

	Year 1	Year 5	Year 10
Direct Jobs	1,046	1,536	2,375
Direct Activity	\$172,555,321	\$253,466,077	\$391,859,369
Total Activity	\$373,099,115	\$548,044,351	\$847,278,328
Total Value-Added	\$212,760,711	\$312,523,672	\$483,162,602
Total Earnings	\$99,167,543	\$145,666,954	\$225,201,580
Total Employment	2,324	3,414	5,278
State Revenue (5% rule)	\$4,958,377	\$7,283,348	\$11,260,079

Source: TXP

Additional Benefits of a Beverage Container Deposit Program

Litter Reduction

The U.S. spends an estimated \$10.8 billion annually on litter cleanup, with state and local governments picking up 11.5 percent of the cost. Beverage containers make up between 4.4 and 21 percent of the litter stream, and studies have indicated that a beverage container deposit programs have proven to be the most effective method for reducing litter.⁷

Beverage deposits create an incentive to dispose of a container properly instead of leaving the container to pollute the environment as trash.

Hawaii saw a 60 percent reduction in beverage containers as a percentage of total litter between 2005 (the year the beverage deposit program was enacted) and 2008.⁸ The table

⁷ The Abell Foundation (March, 2012). *Uncapping the Pros and Cons of a Bottle Deposit Program*. The Abell Report, Volume 25, Number 2.

⁸ State of Hawaii Department of Health (November, 2008). *Report to the 25th Legislature, State of Hawaii, 2009*, as reported in The Abell Report.

below shows 2002 data reported to the U.S. Senate Committee on Environment and Public Works from seven states that enacted bottle deposit legislation.

Table 3: Litter Reduction Post-Implementation of a Beverage Container Deposit Bill

State	Beverage Container Litter Reduction	Total Litter Reduction
Iowa	76%	39%
Maine	69-77%	34-64%
Massachusetts	N/A	30-35%
Michigan	84%	41%
New York	70-80%	30%
Oregon	83%	47%
Vermont	83%	35%

Source: The Abell Report, Volume 25, Number 2 (March, 2012)

Energy Savings

Recycling reduces the need for virgin glass, aluminum, and plastic, leading to reduced energy use. For example, making a new can from recycled materials takes 95% less energy than production using non-recycled inputs. By the same token, burying containers in landfills is a wasted resource. According to industry sources, the approximately 1.3 billion pounds of aluminum buried in the U.S. is the equivalent of what is required to produce 21,000 Airbus A320 aircraft.

Conclusion

There are several important potential outcomes associated with implementing a BCDRS in Texas. First, the level of recycling across the state is likely to rise substantially. In 2010, the average redemption rate for the ten states with similar programs was approximately eighty percent. By contrast, the national average for aluminum can recycling is about fifty percent, with glass and PET (plastic) closer to one-third. Second, the economic impact associated with the program at full implementation could easily yield annual activity of about \$400 million (\$2012), over 5,000 permanent FTEs, and State of Texas revenue over \$11 million (\$2012) each year, over and above any retained deposit revenue. Third, there are additional economic benefits that have not been measured, including lower input costs and energy savings for manufacturers and reduced operating costs for local governments. Historically, deposit programs on beverage containers have proven to be the most effective and efficient way to retrieve post-consumer aluminum, glass and PET bottles for manufacturing reuse. This important legislation will help U.S. manufacturers reduce energy costs, preserve and create jobs, and compete successfully in the global marketplace. Finally, the largest gain is of course to the environment, as reduced litter and lower emissions (again from manufacturing

inputs) have implications well beyond the purview of this study. In conclusion, it is increasingly understood that properly crafted incentives for socially responsible behavior are both effective and appropriate, and BCDRS fit well into that category. When the opportunity to create thousands of jobs and millions of dollars of new economic activity and public revenue is added to the mix, it seems that the State of Texas could do very well by doing good in this case.

About TXP

TXP, Inc. is an economic analysis and public policy consulting firm founded in 1987 in Austin, Texas that consults on a range of projects across the country. Members of TXP are involved in the community and understand the challenges faced by an increasingly complex world, as heightened media attention and an ever more diverse set of stakeholders shine a brighter spotlight on public decision-making and public policy.

Jon Hockenyos

Following stints as an aide to a member of the British Parliament and work on a Senatorial campaign in his home state of Illinois, Mr. Hockenyos founded TXP while attending the LBJ School of Public Affairs at the University of Texas at Austin in 1987. Since then, TXP has successfully completed hundreds of projects for a wide variety of clients. In his role as President of the firm, Mr. Hockenyos is involved in managing the day-to-day operations of the organization, performing technical analysis, and developing strategies for clients. In addition, he makes numerous public presentations and speeches. Mr. Hockenyos has served as a resource witness on a variety of issues in front of city councils, state legislatures, and the U.S. Congress.

Mr. Hockenyos received a Bachelor of Arts in Philosophy from the University of Illinois and Masters of Public Affairs from the LBJ School of Public Affairs, where he has taught as an Adjunct Professor.

Legal Disclaimer

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Appendix A

Detailed Annual Economic Impact Results: Year Ten (\$2012)

	Output	Earnings	Jobs
Agriculture, etc.	\$3,095,689	\$431,045	28
Mining	\$4,075,337	\$822,905	6
Utilities	\$10,658,575	\$2,233,598	22
Construction	\$3,605,106	\$1,371,508	36
Manufacturing	\$53,096,945	\$9,678,926	175
Wholesale Trade	\$19,357,853	\$6,230,564	96
Retail Trade	\$26,372,136	\$9,247,881	378
Transportation & Warehousing	\$23,864,236	\$8,895,208	204
Information	\$24,569,582	\$5,721,147	91
Finance & Insurance	\$50,667,416	\$14,302,867	259
Real Estate	\$60,503,087	\$5,172,544	204
Professional Services	\$30,094,800	\$13,950,194	223
Management of Firms	\$11,050,434	\$4,506,383	58
Administrative & Waste Services	\$452,127,340	\$113,913,519	2,375
Educational Services	\$3,605,106	\$1,489,066	62
Health Services	\$28,017,945	\$13,401,590	352
Arts/Entertainment/Recreation	\$3,448,362	\$1,253,950	66
Accommodation	\$4,898,242	\$1,489,066	58
Food Services	\$14,224,495	\$4,584,755	306
Other Services	\$19,945,642	\$6,191,378	249
Households	N.A.	\$313,487	31
Total Annual	\$847,278,328	\$225,201,580	5,278

Source: TXP



Appendix B

Principles

1. Urban Counties value responsive and accountable government.
2. Urban Counties believe that local government is more responsive and accountable to the citizens and communities and should be utilized for service delivery whenever practical.
3. Urban county citizens hold commissioners court responsible for all county business even though commissioners courts lack authority over many aspects and segments of county business. There is a disconnect between responsibility and authority. This weakens accountability.
4. Urban Counties need greater authority and tools to deal with the problems of contemporary urban society.
5. Urban Counties believe that permissive authority is always good. Restrictions, proscriptions, and mandates are almost always harmful.
6. Urban counties believe that State funds for specific programs should be allocated to counties, regions, or other local areas based upon population, number of clients, or some other appropriate measure of the need for that program or service.
7. Urban Counties believes that funds collected for a purpose should be used for that purpose and supports ending the reliance and utilization of dedicated revenues to balance the State budget.

Priority Issues

Items in this list are the legislative priorities of the Urban Counties.

① Taxation Policy

1. Support the significant reduction of property tax rates by measures to reduce the cost of government and by replacing property tax revenue with revenue from other sources. Such measures to replace property tax revenue should also lower county and county hospital district tax rates by providing new revenue sources to counties.
2. Require sales price disclosure on transfer of real property.
3. Not oppose tax exemptions for pollution control property otherwise not eligible for exempt status under existing rules when the exemption is subject to local option by each taxing unit governing body.
4. Oppose expansion of tax exemptions for property owned by a taxpayer to include leased property.
5. Oppose arbitrary limits on local government That are more restrictive than limits on state government, so long as:

- a. Commissioners Courts remain limited in their ability to manage county business and control county budgets; and
 - b. There is no constitutional protection against unfunded mandates.
6. Clarify the scope of the tax exemption for nonprofit community business organizations to prevent expansion of the exemption to other entities.
7. Support allowing local taxing units to set a residence homestead exemption as ~~[either a percentage or flat-dollar level]~~ a percentage, a flat-dollar level, or a percentage with a maximum individual value.
8. Support reforms to process for equity appeals of appraisals.
9. Support moving up the appraisal notice and protest deadlines to prevent property owners from using the timeline to pressure the appraisal district into a settlement.
10. Support a reduction in the 8% interest applied to the liens of seniors who defer their property taxes.
11. Support reforms to the provisions requiring CADs to pay the costs of all successful legal challenges to an appraisal to improve incentives to settle disputes before litigation.
12. Amend the Constitution to allow a county to create Reinvestment Zones for tax increment financing.
13. Repeal the loophole allowing leased heavy equipment to be valued for property taxes as 1/12th of annual leased revenue rather than market value.

② Juvenile & Criminal Justice

1. Support full state funding for all mandatory JJAEP placements in an amount adequate for year round programs.
2. Support an increase in state funding for indigent defense purposes.
3. ~~[Support restoration of dedicated funds to their original purposes.]~~
4. Oppose efforts to expand the applicability of the Criminal Justice Information System Security Policy to local computer systems unless such systems contain “criminal justice information,” as defined in the Security Policy, that is confidential by law.
5. Authorize county jails to take necessary actions that result in the suspension of SSI & Medicaid benefits and their re-instatement on release, rather than termination of those benefits.
6. Support additional state funding for juvenile probation departments necessitated by raising the age of criminal responsibility to 18.

③ Transportation

1. Support a higher priority for transportation funding in the state’s budget process and increased funding for the Texas Department of Transportation for state highways.

2. Oppose any mandatory proposal to shift responsibility for maintenance of state highways from TxDOT to cities and counties.
3. Support 2014 passage of Proposition 1 dedicating a portion of future growth in oil and gas severance taxes to transportation.
4. ~~Support a state budget that ends diversions of highway funds to state agencies such as DPS and SOAH.]~~
5. Support renewed funding for the County Transportation Infrastructure Fund grant program without reducing urban county eligibility and streamline the program to remove bureaucratic costs and paperwork, especially the mandatory creation of a CETRZ and the annual creation of road condition reports.
6. Support the reduction, or if possible, the elimination of diversions from the State Highway Fund.

④ Community Workforce

⑤ Health and Human Services

1. Support increased funding for mental health and substance abuse services state-wide.
2. Oppose the expansion of behavioral health managed care.
3. Expand capacity of both forensic and civil beds in the state hospital system.
4. Support the continuation of the 1115 Medicaid Transformation Waiver.
5. Support the requirement that DSHS focus funding equity efforts for local mental health programs by considering both the targeted capacity needs of a community (e.g. prevalence in the criminal justice system, homeless populations, developing alternatives to hospitalization) AND a population-based per capita funding methodology that ensures access to adequate community-based mental health services and supports and mental health crisis services and aftercare.
6. Support improving the 10% performance based incentive payment withholding to LMHAs.
7. Support necessary reform to improve workforce recruitment and retention to ensure state hospital capacity is not limited by a lack of workforce.
8. Support removing the concept of overutilization and applied penalties from the State Hospital System.
9. Support state action related to state participation in the funding of indigent health care to maximize access to available federal funds.
10. Not oppose the repeal of the Drivers Responsibility Program.

⑥ Clean Air Act

1. Support full funding for the next biennium for the Texas Emissions Reduction Plan, LIRAP, and LIP programs and maintain the integrity of the TERP, LIRAP, and LIP programs.
2. Support using TERP and LIRAP fund balances on a one-time basis for congestion relief transportation projects as long as:
 - it does not impair SIP compliance;
 - LIRAP funds are distributed on an equitable basis in non-attainment and near non—attainment areas participating in LIRAP; and
 - is in addition to transportation funding for those areas
3. Support local administration of the LIRAP and LIP programs to ensure funds collected in the county are used in the county.

7 Water

1. Participate in joint committees and support removing obstacles to the implementation of desalination.

8 Revenue, Budget, and Miscellaneous

1. No diversion of county vehicle registration fees to cities.
2. Confirm commissioners court authority over the county budget and contracting.
3. No unfunded mandates.
4. Oppose collective bargaining for peace officers unless supported by the commissioners court of the counties affected by the legislation.
5. Oppose all new property tax exemptions, expansion of existing exemptions, or any other narrowing of tax base unless approved by the Urban Counties.
6. Oppose any changes to the prop. 2 program that would broaden the class of property eligible for determination by TCEQ as pollution control property.
7. Support local control over compensation and benefits paid by the county.
8. Support adoption of rules governing the e-filing of documents in criminal cases by the State Supreme Court that:
 - a. Permit each county to designate which forms of electronic filings from among those described in the Texas Code of Criminal Procedures will be accepted by the county;
 - b. Recognize the authority of the Judicial Committee for Information Technology to adopt standards related to specific electronic filings that will be implemented by all counties accepting those filings;
 - c. Require the use of an Electronic Filing Services Provider (EFSP) that has demonstrated that their systems and processes comply with all electronic filing standards and has been certified as such by the Office of Court Administration;
 - d. Permit a local county government to become an EFSP through the Office of Court Administration certification process;

- e. Permit each county to designate which certified EFSP's are authorized to file electronically to courts within the county; and
 - f. Provide a standards-based framework for the electronic signing and authentication of filings into Texas Criminal Courts.
9. Oppose any change in criminal court costs or the division of criminal court costs that could result in counties receiving less total revenue from criminal courts costs and fines.
 10. Support the creation of in-house staff attorneys with the authority to represent the Department of Family and Protective Services in child protection matters, and elimination of the current mandate that local county and district attorneys represent the Department.
 11. Establish that any increase in the fees to be paid to attorneys appointed to represent indigent criminal defendants may not take effect until the adoption of the next county budget and require at least 90 day notice of the proposed increase to be provided to the commissioners court.
 12. Protect county authority to restrict or ban the sale and use of fireworks during drought conditions and when included in a local disaster declaration.
 13. Support the creation of an online voter registration system.
 14. Allow an application for a ballot by mail to be submitted electronically if the capability exists in the county.
 15. Provide clear authority for clerks and election administrators to set a deadline for other political subdivisions to contract with a county for election services.
 16. Change the requirement that an Elections Administrator agree to provide election services to make it permissive authority as is provided for county clerks.
 17. Require a political subdivision that is conducting its own election to notify the county election official of the dates, times, contacts, voting locations, and website links for that election.
 18. Require a political subdivision that does not contract with the county to send ballots by mail to voters identified by the county as annual ballot by mail applicants.
 19. Allow a voter to cancel their mail in ballot for a particular election without cancelling their entire annual ballot by mail application.
 20. Allow a county using countywide polling places that is conducting an election for a political subdivision that extends into an adjacent county to use countywide polling places in or near the portion of the political subdivision that is located in the other county.
 21. Oppose linking specific funding levels by a local government to the accreditation standards for public libraries.
 22. Support full state funding for representation of indigent parties in child welfare cases.
 23. Protect current county authority to regulate the carrying of weapons on county premises.
 24. Support legislation that permits counties to post public notices electronically in lieu of print publication.

25. Oppose any statutory provisions that would financially punish a county for actions other than those of the county’s commissioners court.
26. Oppose amending the State Constitution to protect religious rights unless governmental entities are not subject to new liability for actions resulting in insubstantial burdens on a person’s exercise of those rights.

Positions on other proposals before the 84th Legislature

Items in this list are legislative positions regarding initiatives of member counties or other groups or organizations.

1. **Tax Lien.** Support clarification that a tax lien by a governmental entity reaches all tangible business personal property of a taxpayer, wherever it is located. *Travis County*
2. **Utility Construction Impact.** Support granting authority to commissioners court to recover costs incurred from utility construction that crosses county roads. *Collin County*
3. **Noise Ordinance.** Support providing counties with the ability to adopt and enforce a noise ordinance in the same manner as cities. *Collin County*
4. **Visiting Judges Salary.** Support a requirement that judicial salary saved due to a judicial vacancy inures to the benefit of the judicial district where the vacancy occurs to be used to fund visiting judges. *Collin County*
5. **Electronic Court Reporting.** Support a requirement that electronic court reporting be used for all newly created courts. *Collin County*
6. **Commercial Vehicle Standards Enforcement.** Support expanding the bracket to include Collin County in the counties that can enforce TxDOT regulations for commercial vehicles. *Collin County*
7. **Occupation Drivers License.** Support allowing repeat DWI offenders to get an occupational drivers license for work and treatment. *Collin County*
8. **County Advertising Authority.** Support leasing advertising space on county real and personal property. *Hidalgo County*
9. **Single Family Injunction.** Support allowing a JP to enforce the “one single family dwelling per lot” rule. *Hidalgo County*
10. **Bottle Deposit.** Support a refundable deposit on beverage containers to reduce litter and fund cleanup efforts. *Texas for Clean Water*