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500 West 13th Street
Austin, TX 78701

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Policy Committee Meeting

Travis County Building | Austin, TX

April 5, 2017

AGENDA

9:30 AM Convene.

1. Welcome, Introductions.
2. Administrative items. [Ms. Robin Morris]
 - a. Next Meeting: Wednesday, May 10, 2017 at 9:30 AM.
3. Policy Committee Attendance Record 2016-2017.

		01/15/16	04/07/16	08/25/16	12/01/16	01/11/17	02/08/17	03/08/17	04/05/17	05/10/17	06/08/17	09/07/17	11/16/17
Policy Committee Members	County												
Judge Ed Emmett (Chair)	Harris County	V	V	V	V	V	V	V					
Commissioner Tim Brown	Bell County	V	V	V	V	V	V	V					
Commissioner Kevin Wolff	Bexar County	P	P	V	P	P	V	P					
Judge Matt Sebesta	Brazoria County	V	V	V	E	V	V	V					
Commissioner Alex Dominguez	Cameron County			V	V	V	V	V					
Commissioner Chris Hill	Collin County	E	V	V	V	E	V	V					
Commissioner Theresa Daniel	Dallas County	V	V	V	V	V	V	V					
Commissioner Bobbie Mitchell	Denton County	V	E	E	V	V	V	X					
Judge Veronica Escobar	El Paso County	V	P	P	V	V	V	V					
Judge Robert Hebert	Fort Bend County	V	V	V	V	V	V	V					
Commissioner Ken Clark	Galveston County	V	V	V	V	V	V	V					
Judge Bill Magers	Grayson County	E	V	P	V	V	V	V					
Commissioner Joe Palacios	Hidalgo County	E	P	V	X	P	P	P					
Commissioner Eddie Arnold	Jefferson County	V	E	E	V	V	V	V					
Judge Bruce Wood	Kaufman County	V	V	V	V	V	V	P					
Commissioner Bill McCay	Lubbock County	E	V	E	V	V	V	V					
Judge Mike Bradford	Midland County	P	V	V	V	V	V	P					
Judge Craig Doyal	Montgomery County	E	V	V	P	V	V	V					
Judge Loyd Neal	Nueces County	V	V	V	E	V	E	V					
Judge Glen Whitley	Tarrant County	V	V	V	V	V	P	V					
Judge Sarah Eckhardt	Travis County					V	V	V					
Judge Dan Gattis	Williamson County	V	V	V	V	V	V	X					
Commissioner Kevin Burns	Wise County	V	V	V	V	V	V	V					

V - Present | X - Absent | P - Present by Proxy | E - Excused Absence

4. Consider the minutes from the March 8, 2017 meeting. [pg. 5]
5. Discuss the status of priority issues. [Mr. Donald Lee]
6. Discuss appropriations for the biennium. [Ms. Windy Johnson] [pg. 11]
7. Discuss a potential increase of indigent defense funding. [Ms. Windy Johnson] [pg. 13]

8. Consider interest in oil or gas for new property. [Mr. Donald Lee] [pg. 14]

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 the increase in interests in oil or gas to be counted as new property.

9. Consider expanding eligibility for assistance to local governments disproportionately affected by ad valorem tax exemptions to disabled veterans. [Ms. Windy Johnson] [pg. 15]

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 expansion of state assistance to counties disproportionately affected by disabled veterans property tax exemptions.

10. Discuss a local option retail inventory exemption from property taxes. [Ms. Windy Johnson] [pg. 16]
11. Consider retail inventory appraisal. [Ms. Windy Johnson] [pg. 17]

Recommended Resolution:

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

Oppose changing the method for appraising retail inventory to calculating one twelfth of annual sales similar to that used for auto sales retailers.

12. Consider attorney fees in property tax appeals. [Ms. Windy Johnson] [pg. 18]

Recommended Resolution:

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

Oppose increasing the cap on attorney fees for tax exemption appeals.

13. Consider interest that accrues under the property tax code. [Ms. Gabriela Villareal][pg. 19]

Recommended Resolution:

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

Oppose reducing the calculation of the interest rate used for delinquent taxes under the Property Tax Code.

14. Discuss jurisdiction of justice courts. [Mr. John Dahill] [pg. 20]
15. Consider requests for program data information. [Mr. John Dahill] [pg. 21]

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:

Oppose requirements to provide information regarding the manner in which electronic data is stored and other requirements reasonably believed to be detrimental to data security.

16. Consider overweight vehicles on county roads. [Ms. Windy Johnson] [pg. 22]

Recommended Resolution:

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

Support current weight requirements for vehicles operating on county roads.

17. Consider a waiver of attorney-client confidentiality under Public Information Act. [Mr. John Dahill] [pg. 23]

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 the finding of the Texas Supreme Court that the attorney-client privilege is of such importance that it satisfies the "compelling reason" provision of the Public Information Act.

18. Consider contract retainage. [Mr. John Dahill] [pg. 24]

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 a cap on retainage in a public works contract no lower than 5% of the total contract price if there is no requirement to release retainage before completion of the project except as agreed by the parties to the contract.

19. Consider land use authority for counties. [Ms. Gabriela Villareal] [pg. 25]

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 advertisements of land for residential lots in the unincorporated areas of border counties before the land is platted.

20. Consider land use authority for counties. [Ms. Gabriela Villareal] [pg. 25]

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 allowing a cure period for a violation of county subdivision regulations.

21. Consider land use authority for counties. [Ms. Gabriela Villareal] [pg. 26]

Recommended Resolution:

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

Land Use Authority. Oppose the use of earnest money contracts for lots in border counties before a plat is filed. *Hidalgo County.*

22. Consider Spanish to English to translation during commissioners court meetings. [Ms. Windy Johnson] [pg. 27]

Recommended Resolution:

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

Oppose requirement that commissioners court meetings be broadcast simultaneously in Spanish.

23. Discuss the veterans service office. [Ms. Windy Johnson] [pg. 28]

24. New Business.

25. Adjourn.

Policy Committee Meeting
Travis County | 700 Lavaca, Austin, TX 78701

March 8, 2017

Minutes

Members Present

Judge Ed Emmett (Chair), Harris County
Commissioner Tim Brown, Bell County
Commissioner Kevin Wolff, Bexar County (Proxy Melissa Shannon)
Judge Matt Sebesta, Brazoria County
Commissioner Alex Dominguez, Cameron County
Commissioner Chris Hill, Collin County
Commissioner Theresa Daniel, Dallas County
Judge Veronica Escobar, El Paso County
Judge Robert Hebert, Fort Bend County
Commissioner Ken Clark, Galveston County
Judge Bill Magers, Grayson County
Commissioner Joe Palacios, Hidalgo County (Proxy Lizbeth Gonzales)
Commissioner Eddie Arnold, Jefferson County
Judge Bruce Wood, Kaufman County (Proxy Commissioner Jakie Allen)
Commissioner Bill McCay, Lubbock County
Judge Mike Bradford, Midland County (Proxy Craig Pardue)
Judge Craig Doyal, Montgomery County
Judge Loyd Neal, Nueces County
Judge Glen Whitley, Tarrant County
Judge Sarah Eckhardt, Travis County
Commissioner Kevin Burns, Wise County

Others Present

Joanye Henderson, Harris County
Donna Warndorf, Harris County
Beth Wolf, Fort Bend County
Ann Werlein, Fort Bend County
Mark Mendez, Tarrant County
Julie Wheeler, Travis County
Peter Einhorn Travis County
Claudia Russell, El Paso County
John Dahill, Texas Conference of Urban Counties
Donald Lee, Texas Conference of Urban Counties
Robin Morris, Texas Conference of Urban Counties
Windy Johnson, Texas Conference of Urban Counties
Gabriela Villareal, Texas Conference of Urban Counties

Judge Emmett called the meeting to order at 8:35 AM

The Committee discussed agenda **item 2**, administrative issues.

The Committee discussed agenda **item 3**, attendance record.

The Committee considered agenda **item 4**, approval of the minutes of the February 8, 2017 meeting. On a motion by Commissioner McCay and a second by Commissioner Burns the minutes were approved as presented.

The Committee discussed agenda **item 5**, proposals regarding agricultural and open space property.

The Committee considered agenda **item 10**, appointment of probate investigators. On a motion by Commissioner Arnold and a second by Judge Gattis the following was approved as amended:

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

Require that the creation of new probate investigator positions in a county must be authorized by the county commissioners court.

The Committee discussed agenda **item 11**, the proposed Sandra Bland Act.

The Committee discussed agenda **item 12**, mental health funding priorities.

The Committee considered agenda **item 13**, mental health legislation. On a motion by Judge Escobar and a second by Commissioner Daniel, the following 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 following priorities of the Select Committee on Mental Health:

- a) Early intervention and prevention measures for school-aged children in order to prevent more severe mental health issues;
- b) Strengthening and expanding jail diversion programs;
- c) Addressing the mental health workforce shortages; and
- d) Encouraging approaches to health care that integrate both physical and mental care.

The Committee discussed agenda **item 14**, clean air priorities.

The Committee considered agenda **item 15**, the requirement of a referendum on the expenditure of county funds. On a motion by Judge Hebert and a second by Commissioner Arnold, the following was approved as presented:

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

Oppose any proposal that would require voter approval for the expenditure of general fund revenue and certificates of obligation by any county.

The Committee considered agenda **item 16**, zero-based budgeting. On a motion by Commissioner Daniel and a second by Judge Whitley the following was approved as amended.

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

Oppose mandated budget reports by counties that do not properly account for independent elected county officials, statutory and constitutional mandates for county funding, or would require significant expenditures to create the report.

The Committee considered agenda **item 17**, prohibition of unfunded mandates. On a motion by Commissioner Clark and a second by Commissioner Dominguez the following was approved as presented.

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

Support a Constitutional Amendment prohibiting unfunded mandates on counties.

The Committee considered agenda **item 18**, increased requirements for election equipment. On a motion by Commissioner Clark and a second by Judge Escobar the following was approved as amended.

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

Oppose new unfunded mandates on DRE equipment.

The Committee considered agenda **item 19**, election of board members to an initial emergency services district. On a motion by Commissioner Daniel and a second by Commissioner Burns the following was approved as presented.

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

Support creating an option for commissioners court to have ESDs within their county transition from appointed to elected boards.

The Committee discussed agenda **item 20**, establishment of unified primary elections in Texas. Commissioner Hill made a motion to oppose unified primaries, and with a second from Judge Neal, the following was approved:

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

Oppose unified primary elections.

The Committee considered agenda **item 21**, district judge compensation for extrajudicial services. On a motion by Judge Escobar and a second by Judge Emmett the following was approved as amended.

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 provisions that permit the salary of a district judge to exceed the statutory salary cap by the amount of compensation paid for extrajudicial services unless such provisions are permissive at the discretion of commissioners courts.

The Committee discussed agenda **item 22**, ethics legislation.

The Committee considered agenda **item 23**, local enforcement of environmental laws. On a motion by Judge Eckhardt and a second by Judge Escobar the following was approved as presented.

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 retaining the current authority of local governments to bring actions to recover penalties from violators of environmental laws and regulations.

The Committee considered agenda **item 24**, expedited process for handling public information requests. On a motion by Judge Escobar and a second by Judge Sebesta the following was approved as presented.

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

Expedited Public Information. Support creation of expedited processes for responding to public information requests as an option for governmental bodies.

The Committee considered agenda **item 25**, allowing commissioners court to regulate sale and use of fireworks. On a motion by Judge Escobar and a second by Judge Eckhardt the following was approved as presented.

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

Fireworks Regulation. Support allowing a county to regulate the sale or use of fireworks.

The Committee considered agenda **item 26**, increasing tipping fees. On a motion by Commissioner Daniel and a second by Judge Escobar the following was approved as presented.

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

Tipping Fees. Support an increase in municipal solid waste fees and an increased allocation to local projects.

The Committee considered agenda **item 27**, authorizing another person to transport a mental health detainee. On a motion by Judge Whitley and a second by Commissioner Arnold the following was approved as presented.

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

Behavioral Health Transfers. Support allowing a peace officer to transfer a mental health detainee to another person on the mental health transport list.

The Committee considered agenda **item 6**, dark store theory valuations. On a motion by Judge Eckhardt and a second by Judge Escobar the following was 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, consistent with current court cases, prohibiting the use of the “dark store theory” in the appraisal of business real property.

The Committee considered agenda **item 7**, increasing the school homestead exemption. On a motion by Judge Whitley and a second by Judge Hebert the following was 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 a significant increase in the school homestead exemption and ensure adjustments are made in state funding to schools to account for the exemption.

The Committee considered agenda **item 9**, increasing the exemption for income-producing tangible property. On a motion by Commissioner Clark and a second by Judge Hebert the following was 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 increasing the taxable value of income-producing tangible personal property to qualify for an exemption.

The Committee considered New Business, Webb County support item on open meetings. On a motion by Commissioner Clark and a second by Commissioner Hill, the following was approved as presented:

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

Open Meetings Act. Support amending applicability of the Open Meetings Act to district judges performing management or administrative functions and does not involve adjudication of an individual case. *Webb County.*

The Committee considered New Business, Webb County support item on auditor removal.

The Committee considered New Business, Webb County support item on conformity of auditor salaries. On a motion by Commissioner Clark and a second by Judge Eckhardt, the following was approved as presented:

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

Conformity of Auditor Salaries. Support requiring the salaries, set by district judges, for the County Auditor and the Auditor's assistants to be consistent with locally adopted pay plans adopted by commissioners court. *Webb County.*

The Committee discussed agenda **item 8**, the proposal by House Ways & Means Chairman for revenue caps on cities and counties.

The meeting adjourned at 11:30 AM

Vice Chairman of Policy
Judge Ed Emmett

Date



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April 5, 2017

To: Urban Counties Policy Committee

From: Windy Johnson, Program Manager

Re: **(6) Discuss Appropriations for the Biennium**

Background:

The House is expected to consider the House version of SB 1, the state appropriations act, on Tuesday, April 6th.

The House version appropriates \$2.5b of the Rainy-Day Fund, while the Senate budget uses an accounting maneuver that postpones a transportation payment intended for 2019 to 2020.

While the Senate decreased state funding to school finance by \$1.4 billion, transferring the cost to local property tax payers, the House appropriates \$1.5 billion in new state funds.

The spreadsheet on the following page details some items of interest to counties.

Program	Senate	House
Local Continuing Education Grants	100% Eliminated	Maintained
9-1-1 Network Grants	9% Reduction	9% Reduction
Loans to Local Economic Development Corporations	61% Reduction	47% Reduction
Historic Courthouse Renovation Grants	71% Reduction	4% Reduction
Historic Preservation Grants	12% Increase	20% Reduction
Election Equipment Funds	31% Reduction	31% Reduction
Voter Registration Funds	4% Reduction	4% Reduction
Child Abuse Prevention	66% Increase	83% Increase
Adult Mental Health Funds	6% Increase	6% Increase
Children's Mental Health Funds	17% Reduction	20% Reduction
Mental Health Crisis Funds	26% Increase	77% Increase
State Hospital Funds	Maintain	1% Increase **
County Indigent Health Care Funds	60% Reduction	60% Reduction
Judicial and Court Personnel Training	18% Reduction	16% Reduction
Indigent Defense Funding	6.5% Reduction	6.5% Reduction
Misdemeanor Probation Funding	41% Reduction	40% Reduction*
Court Diversion Programs	9% Reduction	9% Reduction
Community Corrections Programs	9% Reduction	9% Reduction
Alternative to Incarceration Programs	8% Reduction	8% Reduction
Local Parks Grants	36% Reduction	8% Reduction
Recreational Trails Grants	19% Reduction	19% Reduction
Solid Waste Planning Grants	5% Reduction	5% Reduction
Automobile Burglary and Theft Prevention	14% Reduction	4% Reduction
Texas Emission Reduction Program	39% Reduction	Maintained
EMS and Trauma Grants	30% Reduction	30% Reduction
Disaster Funds	68% Increase	Unexpended Balance

* House Version also includes an additional \$129m for Probation Health Insurance, resulting in a total 1% reduction in probation funding

** House also includes an additional \$188m for capacity needs at state hospitals and SSLs and an additional \$105m contingent on legislative recommendations from the Select Committee on Mental Health.

Recommended Resolution:

None.



April 5, 2017

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To: Urban Counties Policy Committee

From: Windy Johnson, Program Manager

Re: **(7) Discuss a Potential Increase of Indigent Defense Funding**

Background:

Currently, a portion of court costs have been allocated to the Abused Children's Counseling Fund and the Comprehensive Rehabilitation Account. In early March, the Court of Criminal Appeals ruled that allocating court costs towards a purpose that is not related to criminal justice matters is unconstitutional.

SB 2053 by West and HB 3739 by Murr would redirect the percentages of court costs previously allocated to these funds to the Fair Defense Account and increase funding for indigent defense by an estimated \$17m/year for the next biennium.

Note, however, SB 2217 by Kolkhorst and SB 2220 by Huffman would move those same funds to Emergency Radio Infrastructure Account.

Urban Counties currently has a position of support for an increase of state funding for indigent defense purposes.

Recommended Resolution:

None.



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April 5, 2017

To: Urban Counties Policy Committee

From: Windy Johnson, Program Manager

Re: **Discuss Interest in Oil or Gas for New Property**

Background:

HB 3614, by Morrison, would change the definition of new property for Truth in Taxation calculations to include the increase in total taxable value of real property interests in oil or gas in place listed on the appraisal roll in the current year for production of oil or gas wells completed after January 1 of the preceding year.

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 the increase in interests in oil or gas to be counted as new property.



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April 5, 2017

To: Urban Counties Policy Committee

From: Windy Johnson, Program Manager

Re: **(9) Consider Expanding Eligibility for Assistance to Local Governments Disproportionately Affected by Ad Valorem Tax Exemptions to Disabled Veterans**

Background:

Under current law, the state provides financial assistance to qualifying local governments that have losses in excess of two percent of property tax revenue for homestead property tax exemptions for totally disabled veterans or their surviving spouses.

A qualifying local government is currently; a city adjacent to a military installation and a county with a military installation located wholly or partly in it.

HB 2356, by Cosper, would expand the qualifying cities and counties to include: a county with a military installation located wholly or partly in it; an adjacent county; and any city in one of those counties.

In fiscal year 2016, Bell County, City of Killeen, City of Copperas Cove and Coryell County requested a total of approximately \$3.2 million.

SB 1 and HB 1 both currently have \$6.5m appropriated for the next biennium.

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 expansion of state assistance to counties disproportionately affected by disabled veterans property tax exemptions.



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April 5, 2017

To: Urban Counties Policy Committee

From: Windy Johnson, Program Manager

Re: **(10) Discuss a Local Option Retail Inventory Exemption
from Property Taxes**

Background:

HB 2973 and HJR 96, by Button, would allow the county commissioners court to adopt an exemption for county taxes for a person's inventory held for sale at retail.

The exemption applies to the current tax year if the official action was adopted before April 15 or to the following tax year if adopted on or after April 15.

The exemption continues for only the four tax years following that tax year.

It does not apply to real property, a car dealer's inventory, a boat dealer's inventory, a heavy equipment dealer's inventory or a dealer's manufactured housing inventory.

Recommended Resolution:

None.



Chairman

Judge
Veronica Escobar
El Paso County

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April 5, 2017

To: Urban Counties Policy Committee

From: Windy Johnson, Program Manager

Re: **(11) Discuss Retail Inventory Appraisal**

Background:

HB 2589, by Button would change the appraisal of retail goods from their fair market value on January 1 to the annual sales based methods currently used for cars and heavy equipment.

Under the proposal retail inventory would be appraised at 1/12 retail sales in the previous year by that retailer. It would phase in over a 9-year period.

Travis County has indicated for the 9-year period there would be a value loss of \$93m.

Recommended Resolution:

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

Oppose changing the method for appraising retail inventory to calculating one twelfth of annual sales similar to that used for auto sales retailers.



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April 5, 2017

To: Urban Counties Policy Committee

From: Windy Johnson, Program Manager

Re: **(12) Consider Attorney Fees in Property Tax Appeals**

Background:

SB 1848 by Bettencourt would increase the maximum amount of attorney's fees to be awarded to a property owner who prevails in a judicial appeal of a property tax determination.

1. \$27,000 (Currently \$15,000) or, if applicable, the amount based on a cost of living adjustment; or
2. an amount equal to 20 percent of the total amount by which the property owner's tax liability is reduced as a result of the appeal, but not to exceed \$153,000 (Currently \$100,000) or, if applicable, the amount based on a cost of living adjustment.

Recommended Resolution:

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

Oppose increasing the cap on attorney fees for tax exemption appeals.



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April 5, 2017

To: Urban Counties Policy Committee

From: Gabriela Villareal, Policy Manager

Re: **(13) Consideration of Interest that Accrues under the Property Tax Code**

Background: Senate Bill 2198, by Senator Donna Campbell, changes the interest rate used in the Property Tax Code. The annual rate is the lesser of 12% or the sum of two percent and the prime rate quoted and published by the Federal Reserve Board on the first business day of the calendar year for which simple interest is calculated.

The bill allows parties to a motion, effort, or appeal to agree to waive or reduce the interest that accrues on a tax, penalty, or refund that is subject to an error correction; on a delinquent tax or a delinquent tax lawsuit to collect; or for an appeal to district court.

This table demonstrates impact of this bill.

	<u>Current</u>	<u>Proposed</u>	<u>2017</u> (Example)
Special Valuation Rollback	7% per year	12% or 2% + prime rate, whichever is less	5.75%
Omitted Property	1% for each month	12% or 2% + prime rate, whichever is less	5.75%
Delinquent	1% for each month	12% or 2% + prime rate, whichever is less	5.75%
Tax Refunds	Treasury Pool rate or 1% + prime rate, whichever is less	12% or 2% + prime rate, whichever is less	5.75%
Tax Deferrals	1% for each month	12% or 2% + prime rate	5.75%

Recommended Resolution:

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

Oppose reducing the calculation of the interest rate used for delinquent taxes under the Property Tax Code.



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April 5, 2017

To: Urban Counties Policy Committee

From: John B. Dahill, General Counsel

Re: **(14) Discuss Jurisdiction of Justice Courts**

Background:

SB 409 by Senator Huffines would raise the jurisdictional limit of justice courts in civil matters from \$10,000 to \$20,000. The effect of the bill is likely to be cases at or under that higher limit being filed in JP courts rather than in county courts.

HB 2573 by Terry Wilson would raise the JP jurisdictional limit from \$10k to \$15k.

Recommended Resolution:

None.



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April 5, 2017

To: Urban Counties Policy Committee

From: John B. Dahill, General Counsel

Re: **(15) Requests for Program Data Information**

Background:

HB 3581 by Capriglione would make “record layouts” subject to public disclosure. “Record layout” is defined to include the location of data in a data file.

Our TechShare staff has indicated that providing the location of data in a data file is akin to handing a roadmap of data to any hacker. In a meeting last month with Representative Capriglione, IT staff from the Attorney General’s office stated the same thing. Further, for software obtained from vendors, retrieving the record layout may require vendor assistance at a cost. HB 3581 does not permit recovery of any expenditures related to producing a record layout.

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:

Oppose requirements to provide information regarding the manner in which electronic data is stored and other requirements reasonably believed to be detrimental to data security.



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April 5, 2017

To: Urban Counties Policy Committee

From: Windy Johnson, Program Manager

Re: **(16) Consider Overweight Vehicles on County Roads**

Background:

Each session several proposals are filed to loosen restrictions on overweight trucks that operate on state and county roads. Below are some bills we are following:

- SB 1524 by Nichols would allow intermodal shipping containers traveling within 30 miles of a port of entry or an international bridge with TxDOT approval to purchase an annual permit with a weight that may not exceed 93,000 pounds.
- SB 1383 by Perry authorizes the DMV to issue a \$1200 permit that authorizes the operation of a vehicle combination used to transport fluid milk at a gross weight up to 90,000 pounds. 15% of the fee would be distributed to the counties designated in the permit application.
- HB 1876 by Martinez allows vehicles transporting agricultural products to exceed weight limitations by up to 15% during harvest season.
- HB 2142 by Kacal expands the overweight truck exception, up to 12%, to include carrying feed, grain or grain byproduct.
- HB 2212, by Stephenson, HB 2319 by Paddie and SB 1102 by Creighton allows a natural gas vehicle to exceed axle weight restrictions equal to the weight difference of the natural gas and system and a diesel system, not to exceed a gross weight of 82k lbs.

Recommended Resolution:

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

Support current weight requirements for vehicles operating on county roads.



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April 5, 2017

To: Urban Counties Policy Committee

From: John B. Dahill, General Counsel

Re: **(17) Consider a Waiver of Attorney-Client Confidentiality
under Public Information Act**

Background:

Under the Public Information Act, a governmental body must timely raise an applicable exception to disclosure in a request for an attorney general decision or the exception is waived. Despite that general rule, some exceptions can be raised later if the governmental body can show a "compelling reason" for withholding the information.

Earlier this year, the Texas Supreme Court ruled that the attorney-client privilege was always a compelling reason. Thus, if a governmental body fails to timely raise the attorney-client privilege with the AG as a reason for withholding information, the governmental body can nonetheless raise it with the AG after the statutory deadline.

SB 1655 by Senator Watson seeks to reverse the decision of the Texas Supreme Court. The bill also contains a list of exceptions to disclosure in the Public Information Act which, if not timely raised, will not support a "compelling reason" claim. The impact of the bill is that if governmental bodies do not timely raise the attorney-client privilege, the privilege will be waived and attorney-client communications will have to be disclosed by governmental bodies.

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 the finding of the Texas Supreme Court that the attorney-client privilege is of such importance that it satisfies the "compelling reason" provision of the Public Information Act.



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April 5, 2017

To: Urban Counties Policy Committee

From: John B. Dahill, General Counsel

Re: **(18) Consideration of Contract Retainage**

Background:

HB 3913 by Rep. Shine would limit that amount of retainage permitted under a public works contract to 5% of the total contract price. The bill would further mandate that no more than 2% of the contract price could continue to be held as retainage after the governmental entity has "beneficial use" of the project. "Beneficial use" is proposed to mean the ability to put the project into operation for its intended purpose, or the ability to be issued a certificate of occupancy for a building.

The ability to occupy a building does not mean the building is free of substantial construction defects that should be addressed by the contractor. Therefore, the release of retainage should not be statutorily mandated before project completion.

Recommended Resolution:

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

Support a cap on retainage in a public works contract no lower than 5% of the total contract price if there is no requirement to release retainage before completion of the project except as agreed by the parties to the contract.



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April 5, 2017

To: Urban Counties Policy Committee

From: Gabriela Villareal, Policy Manager

Re: **(19-21) Consideration of Land Use Authority for Counties**

Currently, individual residential lots may not be sold without appropriate review and approval by the local government. A subdivision plat in counties near an international border must specifically address the construction or installation of roads, water utilities, and wastewater disposal. Below are bills in this legislative session dealing with county land use authority.

19. House Bill 1328, by Representative Ryan Guillen, permits advertisements for lots in border counties that have not received final plat approval. The bill requires statements in advertisements that lots may not be sold until final plat approval and lots may not be occupied until water and sewer are connected.

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 advertisements of land for residential lots in the unincorporated areas of border counties before the land is platted.

20. House Bill 3352, by Representative Garnet Coleman, would allow violators of any provision related to County Subdivision Regulations to avoid civil penalties by correcting the violation within 30 days from receiving a notice from the county or the Attorney General.

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 allowing a cure period for a violation of county subdivision regulations.

21. House Bill 1386, by Representative Ryan Guillen, would permit the use of earnest money contracts for lots in border counties before a plat is filed. It requires a seller to provide written notice of intent to enter said contract to the state Attorney General and the local government responsible for approving the plat.

Recommended Resolution:

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

Land Use Authority. Oppose the use of earnest money contracts for lots in border counties before a plat is filed. *Hidalgo County.*



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To: Urban Counties Policy Committee

From: Windy Johnson, Program Manager

Re: **(22) Consider Spanish to English to Translation During Commissioners Court Meetings**

Background:

HB 4157, by Gonzales, would require legislative committees, city councils and commissioners courts to provide simultaneous English to Spanish translation at meetings if requested in writing 3 days prior to the meeting.

Recommended Resolution:

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

Oppose requirement that commissioners court meetings be broadcast simultaneously in Spanish.



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April 5, 2017

To: Urban Counties Policy Committee

From: Windy Johnson, Program Manager

Re: **(23) Discuss the Veterans Service Office**

Background:

In a county with a population of 200,000 or more, the commissioners court is required to maintain a veterans county service office that is separate and distinct from other offices and is staffed by at least one full time employee.

SB 1676, by Lucio, would require the county also maintain a separate budget, office and title, and that the veterans service officer report directly to the commissioners court.

In addition, SB 2135, by Lucio would require the VCSO be notified upon the incarceration of a veteran and visit the veteran within 72 hours in the county jail, and as soon as practicable in the city jail.

Recommended Resolution:

None.

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.
2. Require sales price disclosure on transfer of real property.
3. Oppose any expansion of the pollution control property tax exemption that would include property used to produce goods or services.
4. Oppose expansion of tax exemptions for property owned by a taxpayer to include leased property other than property leased to a charter school for one or more grades from kindergarten through grade 12.
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 a percentage, a flat-dollar level, or a percentage with a minimum or maximum individual value.

8. Support reforms to process for equity appeals of appraisals.
9. Repeal the loophole allowing leased heavy equipment to be valued for property taxes as 1/12th of annual leased revenue rather than market value.
10. Oppose the repeal of the penalty when land that was previously appraised as agricultural property is converted to another use.
11. Oppose all new property tax exemptions, expansion of existing exemptions, or any other narrowing of tax base unless approved by the Urban Counties.
12. Oppose expansion to all taxpayers the right to pay property taxes in installments over the year.
13. Oppose reducing or eliminating agriculture and open-space rollback taxes, but support adjustment of the current 7% annual interest used to calculate rollback taxes.
14. Oppose extending deferment of property taxes beyond the elderly and disabled and support establishing a reasonable indexed rate on deferral.
15. Support, consistent with current court cases, prohibiting the use of the “dark store theory” in the appraisal of business real property.
16. Support a significant increase in the school homestead exemption and ensure adjustments are made in state funding to schools to account for the exemption.
17. Support increasing the taxable value of income-producing tangible personal property to qualify for an exemption.
18. Support allowing the increase in interests in oil or gas to be counted as new property.
19. Support expansion of state assistance to counties disproportionately affected by disabled veterans property tax exemptions.
20. Oppose changing the method for appraising retail inventory to calculating one twelfth of annual sales similar to that used for auto sales retailers.
21. Oppose increasing the cap on attorney fees for tax exemption appeals.
22. Oppose reducing the calculation of the interest rate used for delinquent taxes under the Property Tax Code.

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. 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.
4. Support additional state funding for juvenile probation departments if the age of criminal responsibility is raised to 18.
5. Support grandfather provisions for all jails that were not designed for face-to-face visitation but for video visitation in full compliance with existing State law and jail standards.
6. Support sufficient State funding for local juvenile probation departments to pay for the full costs of keeping in local programs, or in regional detention facilities, all children diverted from State facilities through a restructuring of the State Juvenile Justice Department.

7. Support state payment to counties for costs of detaining in county jails technical parole violators and new-offense violators held solely for parole revocation purposes.
8. Oppose changes in court costs in criminal cases that are expected to have a negative fiscal impact to counties.
9. Support changes to pre-trial release to require the use of locally verified evaluation tools to determine a criminal defendant's risk of flight or danger to the community. Promote: (1) establishing pretrial risk assessments; (2) the elimination of bond schedules; (3) greater discretion for magistrates regarding pre-trial release; and (4) rebuttable presumptions in favor of personal bond.
10. Support additional funding for DPS crime labs provided it does not negatively impact existing local crime labs.
11. Oppose efforts to permit a defendant placed on deferred adjudication probation to obtain an expunction without payment of court costs unless the defendant is indigent.
12. Require that the creation of new probate investigator positions in a county must be authorized by the county commissioners court.
13. Oppose requirements to provide information regarding the manner in which electronic data is stored and other requirements reasonably believed to be detrimental to data security.

3 Transportation

1. Oppose eliminating tolling options unless state funding for highways is increased sufficiently to replace lost toll revenue.
2. Support enhanced funding for freight transportation infrastructure projects to address economic growth and an ever increasing population.
3. Support changes to the administrative fees retained by counties to register vehicles only if the new fees are reasonably expected to recoup county costs for providing those services.
4. Oppose the establishment of uniform limits on the fees charged by authorized private deputies for title services.
5. Request and support including counties in any proposed statutory changes for TxDOT intended to mitigate increased and unnecessary road building costs due to delays in utility relocation.
6. Support current weight requirements for vehicles operating on county roads.

4 Health and Human Services

1. Support increased funding for mental health and substance abuse services state-wide.
2. Expand capacity of both forensic and civil beds in the state hospital system.
3. Support the continuation of the 1115 Medicaid Transformation Waiver.
4. Support state action related to state participation in the funding of indigent health care to maximize access to available federal funds.
5. Not oppose the repeal of the Drivers Responsibility Program. If repealed, seek replacement funding for trauma care.

6. Support a dual approach of state funding for jailer mental health training, increase inpatient capacity, and support diversion at the earliest possible point utilizing the Expanded Sequential Intercept Model.
7. Support continued federal funding to local communities for refugee healthcare.
8. Support expansion to additional counties of the Harris County mental health jail diversion pilot program model to reduce recidivism, arrest, and incarceration of individuals with mental illness.
9. Support the following priorities of the Select Committee on Mental Health:
 - Early intervention and prevention measures for school-aged children to prevent more severe mental health issues;
 - Strengthening and expanding jail diversion programs;
 - Addressing the mental health workforce shortages; and
 - Encouraging approaches to health care that integrate both physical and mental care.

⑤ 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 local administration of the LIRAP and LIP programs to ensure funds collected in the county are used in the county.
3. Use the TERP funds only for programs that will assist nonattainment and near nonattainment areas in meeting EPA Ozone standards.

⑥ Water

⑦ Revenue, Budget, and Miscellaneous

1. Confirm commissioners court authority over the county budget and contracting.
2. No unfunded mandates.
3. Oppose collective bargaining for peace officers unless supported by the commissioners court of the counties affected by the legislation.
4. Support local control over compensation and benefits paid by the county.
5. 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.
6. Protect county authority to restrict or ban the sale and use of fireworks during drought conditions and when included in a local disaster declaration.
7. Support the creation of an online voter registration system.
8. Support full state funding for representation of indigent parties in child welfare cases.
9. Support legislation that permits counties to post public notices electronically in lieu of print publication.

10. Oppose financial penalties imposed on local governments by the state for failure to comply with state mandates to enforce or to not enforce federal laws.
11. Support the longstanding constitutional principle that governmental entities must justify substantial burdens on the exercise of religious rights by showing the furtherance of a compelling governmental interest by the least restrictive means.
12. Oppose requirements to include on bond propositions information other than the total amount of bonds to be issued if approved and the proposed uses of the bonds.
13. Support giving all counties the option to adopt a fire code and rules necessary to administer and enforce the fire code.
14. Oppose creation of a new fireworks season unless commissioners courts are granted discretion over the sale of fireworks in that county for the new season.
15. Support the current role of local emergency management authorities and the county judge in responding to potential and actual emergencies and disasters.
16. Oppose prohibiting the use of eminent domain for recreation purposes.
17. Support allowing any county to regulate game rooms.
18. Retain the current option to hold bond elections in May.
19. Require telephone/telegraph facilities to follow the same procedures as other utilities in locating their facilities in the county Right-of-Way.
20. Oppose restrictions on the ability of local governments to effectively and efficiently communicate with the legislature and other state and federal entities.
21. Support financial transparency requirements that permit the use of existing reports and other documents and that minimize the need to express the same information in different manners or formats.
22. Oppose mandates to produce financial reports that are duplicative of reports already required of counties.
23. Support proposals to permit public access to public information on the personal devices of public officers and employees that include reasonable provisions to guard against frivolous and abusive lawsuits against public officers and employees.
24. In the absence of market value transparency, oppose efforts to require local governments to pay an opposing party's attorney fees and court costs in eminent domain proceedings.
25. Support efforts to maintain the long-established prohibition of guns in any portion of a building used by court participants.
26. Establish that the earliest effective date for any increase in salary budgets outside the control of commissioners court shall be the first day of the next county fiscal year following 90 days notice of the proposed increase to be provided to the commissioners court.
27. Oppose changes to the criteria governments must meet to show "actual progress" on projects to prevent real property acquired through eminent domain to be subject to repurchase if the changes would require significant expenditures for development labor and materials to show actual progress.
28. Support continued federal funding for local communities to help cover operational costs for holding undocumented criminal aliens in the criminal justice system and the costs to house them.

29. Support changes to the mandated disclosure of interested parties by vendors to:
 - exempt small contracts and contracts awarded to low bidders, through cooperative purchasing programs, or through interlocal agreements;
 - clarify the mandate applies only to written contracts for goods and services;
 - clarify that contracts remain valid if a vendor fails to accurately make a mandated disclosure; and
 - clarify that a “controlling interest” is an ownership or participating interest in an entity that exceeds 50%.
30. Oppose new mandated reporting of receipt and use of Federal funds by counties.
31. Support commissioners court optional authority to allow blanket approval to a county appraisal district board the authority to lease or convey property.
32. Support removing the limitations on the number of counties that may choose, with Secretary of State authorization, to transition into the Countywide Polling Places program.
33. Oppose injecting commissioners courts as decision makers in condemnation actions not involving their respective counties.
34. Support the current permissive authority of governmental entities to sell property for less than fair market value.
35. Oppose granting whistleblower status to employees unless they report in writing illegal conduct to a person designated by the employing governmental entity to receive such reports, the attorney general, or an appropriate law enforcement authority.
36. Oppose shortening the early voting period.
37. Oppose new requirements that political subdivisions provide advance notice to the Governor before conveying land to the federal government, such conveyance being subject to disapproval by the Governor.
38. Support retaining the ability of governmental bodies to consider economic development information in closed meetings.
39. Support local control of the records of county and district clerks.
40. Oppose any proposal that would require voter approval for the expenditure of general fund revenue and certificates of obligation by any county.
41. Oppose mandated budget reports by counties that do not properly account for independent elected county officials, statutory and constitutional mandates for county funding, or would require significant expenditures to create the report.
42. Support a Constitutional Amendment prohibiting unfunded mandates on counties.
43. Oppose new unfunded mandates on DRE election equipment.
44. Support creating an option for commissioners court to have ESDs within their county transition from appointed to elected boards.
45. Oppose provisions that permit the salary of a district judge to exceed the statutory salary cap by the amount of compensation paid for extrajudicial services so unless such provisions are permissive at the discretion of commissioners courts.

46. Support retaining the current authority of local governments to bring actions to recover penalties from violators of environmental laws and regulations.
47. Oppose unified primary elections.
48. Support the finding of the Texas Supreme Court that the attorney-client privilege is of such importance that it satisfies the “compelling reason” provision of the Public Information Act.
49. Support a cap on retainage in a public works contract no lower than 5% of the total contract price if there is no requirement to release retainage before completion of the project except as agreed by the parties to the contract.
50. Oppose advertisements of land for residential lots in the unincorporated areas of border counties before the land is platted.
51. Oppose allowing a cure period for a violation of county subdivision regulations.
52. Oppose requirement that commissioners court meetings be broadcast simultaneously in Spanish.

Positions on other proposals before the 85th Legislature

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

1. **Tax Rate Notice.** Clarify that a county or municipality that opts to use the simplified public notice for proposed tax rates is not also required to comply with additional notice requirements for those tax rates. *Travis County*
2. **Texas Highway Beautification Act.** Support Scenic Texas and other entities asking for a rehearing on the Texas Highway Beautification Act. *Scenic Texas*
3. **Jail Standards Exam.** Support creation of a comprehensive exam for jail commanders on the current rules and standards established by the Texas Commission on Jail Standards. *Mr. Craig Pardue*
4. **EDAP Water Funding.** Support increased funding for the Texas Water Development Board’s Economically Distressed Areas Program. *El Paso County*
5. **Dishonored Checks.** Support an option to allow a county to contract with an outside collections firm to collect dishonored checks and credit card invoices. *Dallas County*
6. **Jury Summons.** Support allowing counties to include a link to a jury summons questionnaire with the jury summons in lieu of a hardcopy. *Dallas County*
7. **Electronic Monitoring.** Support allowing individuals placed on probation to participate in a County run electronic monitoring program in lieu of jail time. *Dallas County*
8. **Leasing Property.** Support consideration of authorizing counties to utilize a broker for leasing county owned space. *Dallas County*
9. **Drones.** Support prohibiting the operation of a drone over secure penal or correctional facilities. *Travis County*
10. **Venue Taxes for Parks.** Support allowing counties to use venue taxes to fund projects in the parks and recreation system. *Travis County*

11. **County Welfare.** Support removing the limit on the amount of petty cash a commissioners court may provide to a county welfare department in a county with a population greater than 1.3 million. *Harris County*
12. **Supplemental Civil Service Commissions.** Support optional authority of a commissioners court to appoint, and designate the responsibilities of, a supplemental civil service commission to assist the county civil service commission. *Dallas County*.
13. **Firework Authority.** Support allowing a county to prohibit the use of fireworks during hours determined by commissioners court.
14. **Law Library.** Support allowing a county law library to be established anywhere in the county rather than only the county seat and allowing the county law library fund to be used to establish and maintain a self-help center to provide free legal resources to residents.
15. **Bexar County Optional Vehicle Registration Fee.** Support allowing Bexar County to impose, if approved by a majority of qualified voters, an additional \$10 vehicle registration fee for transportation projects chosen by their local RMA. *Bexar County*
16. **Overseas Military E-Mail Ballot Program.** Support the repeal of the expiration date of the Overseas E-Mail Ballot Pilot Program and allow any county to participate in the program. *Bexar County*.
17. **Tax Abatement Removal within a TIRZ.** Support removing the requirement for approval on tax abatements within TIRZ by entities not participating in the zone. *Bexar County*
18. **Super Utilizer Pilot Project.** Support State funding for a Super Utilizer Pilot Project in Bexar County. *Bexar County*
19. **Pretrial Program Fee.** Support allowing county pretrial supervision programs, run outside CSCDs, to collect supervision fees. *Bexar County*
20. **County Building Standards.** Support allowing urban counties to adopt building regulations upon petition from residents and passage of a proposition to authorize said regulations. *Bexar County*
21. **Solid Waste Collection in Unincorporated Areas.** Support authorizing Counties to require the provision of solid waste collection by landlords of two or more leased dwellings located in an unincorporated area. *Bexar County*
22. **Expedited Public Information.** Support creation of expedited processes for responding to public information requests as an option for governmental bodies.
23. **Fireworks Regulation.** Support allowing a county to regulate the sale or use of fireworks.
24. **Tipping Fees.** Support an increase in municipal solid waste fees and an increased allocation to local projects.
25. **Behavioral Health Transfers.** Support allowing a peace officer to transfer a mental health detainee to another person on the mental health transport list.
26. **Open Meetings Act.** Support amending applicability of the Open Meetings Act to district judges performing management or administrative functions and does not involve adjudication of an individual case. *Webb County*.
27. **Conformity of Auditor Salaries.** Support requiring the salaries, set by district judges, for the County Auditor and the Auditor's assistants to be consistent with locally adopted pay plans adopted by commissioners court. *Webb County*.

28. **Land Use Authority.** Oppose the use of earnest money contracts for lots in border counties before a plat is filed. *Hidalgo County.*