

THE STATE OF TEXAS §

COUNTY OF FORT BEND §

Resolution In Support of Local Governments

WHEREAS, the Texas Legislature places a long list of responsibilities on counties to provide vital functions of government mandates the expenditure of .65 for every \$1 of property taxes collected; and

WHEREAS, Fort Bend County must enforce the laws through its Sheriff's Office, build and operate the jails and support the state's criminal and civil court system; and

WHEREAS, Fort Bend County must protect the integrity of, and provide public access to, property ownership and transaction records and other vital public documents; and

WHEREAS, Fort Bend County must conduct state, federal and local elections, register vehicles, assess and collect taxes, provide legal counsel for those in need and pay medical bills for the indigent; and

WHEREAS, in Fort Bend County, road construction is a large and growing expense because state and federal transportation programs have failed to provide adequate highway construction and maintenance funding to keep pace with our rapid population growth; and

WHEREAS, the Texas Legislature mandates that Fort Bend County provide many services but provides little or no state funding except for a few small subsidies and grant programs; and

WHEREAS, Fort Bend County collects about 17% of the total property tax revenue collected in the county each year and Fort Bend taxpayers have seen reductions in the county's property tax rate for over 20 years; from 65.7 cents per hundred in 1994 to 46.4 cents per hundred in 2018; and

WHEREAS, revenue caps, unfunded mandates, and other similar measures would provide little, if any relief to Texans, and would seriously diminish local control by limiting the county's ability to provide non-mandated services like roads, drainage and flood control, libraries, EMS response, parks and other essential services; and

WHEREAS, such measures would shift critical project funding decisions to the Texas Legislature in Austin, thereby placing significant control of local spending in the hands of the Legislature; and

WHEREAS, the importance of local response to emergencies such as the novel coronavirus, hurricanes, and more has highlighted the need for local flexibility

WHEREAS, Texas has the highest rate of uninsured and underinsured in the United States and 23% of the residents in Fort Bend County are uninsured and expanding Medicaid coverage ensures the economic stability and future of Texas families; and,

WHEREAS, COVID-19 has tested the dependence on national agencies for critical emergency equipment showing a need for faster response and local stockpiles for such emergency equipment like personal protective equipment (PPE); and,

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED BY THE COMMISSIONERS COURT OF FORT BEND COUNTY, TEXAS, THAT:

This 15th day of December 2020, the **Fort Bend County Commissioners Court**, meeting as a body in Richmond, Texas:

1. Supports efforts in favor of allowing locally elected officials to make decisions that are beneficial to the interest of county residents

2. Opposes any further attempts to impose revenue or appraisal caps upon Texas counties, and the expresses deep appreciation to all legislators who oppose these unsound measures
3. Opposes unfunded mandates or other legislation that preempts or erodes the authority of county government or is detrimental to the county's ability to pursue citizen priorities or respond to local citizen concerns
4. Supports the Legislature to move decisively to lower the amount of uninsured & underinsured by expanding Medicaid coverage
5. Supporting state agencies to build statewide stockpiles for critical emergency equipment such as personal protective equipment.

SIGNED, THIS 15th DAY OF DECEMBER 2020.

County Judge KP George

Commissioner Vincent Morales, Precinct 1

Commissioner Grady Prestage, Precinct 2

Commissioner Andy Meyers, Precinct 3

Commissioner Ken DeMerchant, Precinct 4

ATTEST:

Laura Richard, County Clerk