

# **PRECINCT 3 LEGISLATIVE AGENDA**

**COMMISSIONER ANDY MEYERS**

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## ETJ DETACHMENT – REP. MILLER

- ISSUE:
    - Residents in the unincorporated portion of Fort Bend County have expressed a strong desire to be removed from Houston's ETJ.
    - Local Government Code Chapter 42 states that the ETJ of a municipality may only be reduced through written consent by ordinance or resolution. This leaves our residents, who will never be annexed by Houston, with no legal way to leave Houston's ETJ.
  - SOLUTION:
    - A local bill for Fort Bend County revising Local Government Code Chapter 42 and allow communities within Houston's ETJ to petition for detachment. They would be given the option to be fully unincorporated, join another city, or form their own city.
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## **STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENTS – REP. MILLER**

- **ISSUE:**
    - The City of Houston currently levies a sales tax in the unincorporated area of Fort Bend County, collecting millions of dollars each year. Houston spends no money on government services in the area in which the taxes are collected, forcing the County to fund roads and other government services without support from Houston.
  - **SOLUTION:**
    - Introduce a local bill applying to Houston only, requiring a portion of the City's sales tax collections from Strategic Partnership Agreements to fund projects of public necessity within Fort Bend County.
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## OPEN MEETINGS – DR. ZERWAS HB 62

- ISSUE:

- During Hurricane Harvey and the subsequent flood, communication between OEM and individual commissioners was at a minimum due to fears of violating the Open Meetings Act.
- People living within city limits received real-time information as the County Judge could legally communicate with them throughout the storm.
- Some of our unincorporated residents were not able to receive real-time information due to the inability of commissioners to legally communicate with the County Judge.

- SOLUTION:

- Modify Government Code Chapter 551 to allow communication between the County Judge and commissioners during declared disasters. And allow commissioners to ask questions during phone/video conferences, even if a quorum is present. Provided the meeting is recorded or minutes are taken and posted on the county's website.
  - Allow for a waiver of the two-hour notification rule during county, state or federally declared disasters if there is an imminent threat to life or property.
  - Allow members of Commissioners Courts in counties with a population greater than 100,000 that also have an unincorporated population greater than 50% to meet without notice during a county, state or federally declared disaster, again provided that meetings are recorded and minutes are posted.
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## COUNTY ASSISTANCE DISTRICT SPENDING – REP. REYNOLDS HB 203

- ISSUE:
    - CADs cannot be created in areas that have reached the 8.25% sales tax limit. This limits where CADs can be created and where CAD-paid services can be provided.
    - In 2017, HB 2182 was passed in the House and Senate but Gov. Abbott vetoed the bill, which would have allowed CADs to spend money in areas where the 8.25% limit had been reached.
  - SOLUTION:
    - Clear up language in HB 2182 and clearly state that a CAD can be created in areas where the 8.25% limit has been reached, but cannot collect a tax in those areas.
    - Explicitly allow for CADs to only spend money in these areas.
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## **MUNICIPAL AUTHORITY WITH CADS – REP. STEPHENSON**

- **ISSUE:**
    - Cities can currently object to CAD's being created in their ETJ's. This authority, when exercised by the City of Houston, inhibits the County's ability to keep sales tax revenue in the area where it is collected. Having a political body that taxpayers and voters cannot vote for overriding action of the political body they can vote for is inappropriate.
  - **SOLUTION:**
    - Amend Local Government Code 387 to remove the ability of a municipality to object to the creation of a CAD within it's ETJ.
    - Amend LGC 387 to specify that once a city fully annexes an area that is covered by a CAD, that area of the CAD disbands.
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## **DISBANDING COUNTY ASSISTANCE DISTRICTS – REP. MILLER**

- **ISSUE:**
  - Local Government Code 387 allows for the creation and modification of a CAD, but does not provide for the dissolution of a CAD.
  - This causes issues when a district may want to cease its existence, but cannot legally disband due to the lack of authority to do so.
- **SOLUTION:**
  - Clarify in Local Government Code 387 that the governing body of a CAD may disband the district by majority vote of the Board as long as the district has no outstanding debts.
  - Include language that would allow creation of new CAD on top of disbanded CAD without having to hold a new election.
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## CAD ABILITY TO MAKE LOANS – REP. REYNOLDS

- ISSUE:
    - County Assistance Districts can currently accept loans from the federal government, state and local governments, and public or private individuals. CADs cannot, however, give loans to local governments or other CADs, which can cause issues when projects need to be jointly funded.
  - SOLUTION:
    - Modify LGC 387.006 to allow a CAD to make loans to state and local governments and to other CADs.
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# COUNTY REGULATION OF PARKS – REP. REYNOLDS HB 200

- Issue:

- Fort Bend County does not have the ability to enact or enforce park regulations. Park visitors let dogs runs loose on the ball fields and drive their vehicles outside the parking and drive areas. Incidents like these put the County at risk and can be costly if damage occurs.
- HB 1815 was introduced in 2017, which would have included Fort Bend County in existing legislation that currently applies to Harris County. The bill made it through the House but died in the Senate.

- Solution:

- Modify Local Government Code 320.0455, which applies to Harris County, and include Fort Bend County in the statute, which will allow the county to enact park regulations, enforce rules, and impose fines on violators.
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## JUNKYARD LICENSING FEES – DR. ZERWAS

- ISSUE:
    - Junkyards have become a major problem in Fort Bend County, and in implementing our current ordinance, it has become clear that junkyard owners are not fully committed to following the law.
  - SOLUTION:
    - Modify Transportation Code 396.041(2)(B) to include Fort Bend County in the provision that allows Harris County to charge a \$500 for the issuance or renewal of a license to operate in the county.
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## HUMAN TRAFFICKING TRAINING – REP. MILLER

- ISSUE:
    - Human Trafficking is becoming a concern in the Houston region. With more reports of trafficking throughout the region, it is imperative that we take the initiative and combat it before it becomes a major issue in Fort Bend County.
  - SOLUTION:
    - Work with House Appropriations and Senate Finance to dedicate more funding towards training for law enforcement, prosecutors, school teachers/administrators, and parents.
    - Provide matching funds to allow county law enforcement and prosecutors to undergo annual training and to provide information and training to parents on this matter.
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## UTILITY RELOCATION COST SHARING – REP. MILLER

- ISSUE:
    - Currently, if a mobility project is a toll road (see Westpark), the “department” bears 50% of the cost of moving utilities from public right of way. Due to this, the cost of the Westpark Tollway was \$6 million higher than expected.
  - Solution:
    - Clarify that Transportation Code 203.092 definition of “department” does not include a Fort Bend County Toll Road Authority.
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## LOCAL FLOOD CONTROL DISTRICTS – DR. ZERWAS

- ISSUE:
    - The Jones Creek and Bessie's Creek areas are subject to possible flooding during major storms. There is a need for flood control infrastructure, and there are no Special Districts that could address this issue and which could help fund needed infrastructure.
  - SOLUTION:
    - Introduce legislation that will allow for the creation of two new special flood control districts, similar to the makeup of the Willow Fork Drainage District, that could fund and maintain flood control infrastructure.
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## **CAD SPENDING THAT BENEFITS THE DISTRICT – REP. MILLER**

- **ISSUE:**
    - Current CAD language only allows for funds to be spent within the boundaries of the district. This limits how the money can be spent as there are instances where money can be spent outside the district but directly benefits the district (ex. Building a connection to a facility inside CAD boundaries that brings extra traffic to said facility).
  - **SOLUTION:**
    - Modify language in LGC 387 to allow CADs to “perform functions in the district or for the benefit of the district.”
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