

County Judges and Commissioners Association of Texas 2026 Resolutions

Resolutions originate among members of Commissioners Courts and are submitted to the Resolutions Committee for consideration. County Judges and Commissioners spend hours reviewing and revising draft Resolutions before presenting them for adoption.

Resolutions adopted at the Annual CJCAT Conference serve as the CJCAT Legislative Platform. The CJCAT Legislative Committee and staff work diligently to ensure the issues represented in the Resolutions are brought before the Texas Legislature.

The following Resolutions were passed by the County Judges and Commissioners Association of Texas representing 254 counties in the State of Texas on October 7, 2026, during the CJCAT Annual Conference.

1. Thanks to the Host Court

WHEREAS, the Annual Conference of the County Judges and Commissioners Association of Texas was conducted in McLennan County, Texas, on Oct. 5-8, 2026; and

WHEREAS, the Honorable Commissioners Court of McLennan County has welcomed the County Judges and Commissioners Association of Texas in the most entertaining and excellent manner;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the County Judges and Commissioners Association of Texas expresses its wholehearted thanks and deep appreciation to the McLennan County Commissioners Court for its courteous and warm hospitality extended to each of us.

2. Thanks to the Conference Sponsors and Exhibitors

WHEREAS, the Annual Conference of the County Judges and Commissioners Association of Texas was conducted in McLennan County, Texas, on Oct. 5-8, 2026; and

WHEREAS, the many sponsors and exhibitors provide significant financial support for the conference and the Association; and

WHEREAS, the sponsors and exhibitors provide valuable information to our members;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the County Judges and Commissioners Association of Texas expresses its deep appreciation to our generous conference sponsors and exhibitors.

3. Thanks to State and Local Associations and Friends of County Government

WHEREAS, the Annual Conference of the County Judges and Commissioners Association of Texas was conducted in McLennan County, Texas, on Oct. 5-8, 2026; and

WHEREAS, the members of the County Judges and Commissioners Association of Texas wish to acknowledge the expertise of and thank the staff of: Jim Allison of Allison, Bass & Magee, LLP; the Texas Association of Counties and Executive Director Susan Redford; the V.G. Young Institute of County Government, a part of Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service, and Executive Director Peter McGuill, Ph.D.; the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service agents' professional associations; the Texas Association of Regional Councils; *County Progress* Magazine and Editor Julie Anderson; and the many other state and local associations and people who have all been so helpful to county government;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that this Association thanks all of these individuals and their staffs for their past, present, and future help on behalf of county government.

4. Memorial to Deceased Officials and Special Friends

WHEREAS, the following highly regarded members and friends of the County Judges and Commissioners Association of Texas are deceased; and

WHEREAS, the Association desires to pay appropriate respect to these members and friends; and

WHEREAS, since our last conference, the County Judges and Commissioners Association of Texas has mourned the passing of:

West Texas

Former Concho County Judge Allen Amos
Former Lampasas County Judge Wayne Boultinghouse
Former Carson County Commissioner Michael (Mike) Frank Britten
Erath County Commissioner Jim Buck
Former Throckmorton County Judge Trey Carrington
Former El Paso County Judge Alicia R. Chacón
Former Roberts County Judge Vernon Cook
Bailey County Commissioner Jim Daniel
Ochiltree County Commissioner J.W. DeWitt
Tom Green County Commissioner Sammy Farmer
Bandera County Commissioner Greg Grothues
Former Callahan County Commissioner H. Lowell Johnson
Ochiltree County Commissioner Joe Johnson
Former Oldham County Commissioner Ben Moore
Irion County Commissioner John Nanny
Reeves County Commissioner Antonio M. "Tony" Trujillo

South Texas

Former Hidalgo County Commissioner Abelardo "Lalo" Arcaute
Former San Patricio County Judge James Marvin (J.M.) Edmondson
Former Duval County Commissioner Alejo Carlos Garcia
Former Duval County Judge Edmundo B. "E.B." Garcia Jr.
Calhoun County Commissioner David Hall
Former Fort Bend County Judge Bob Hebert
Comal County Judge Sherman Krause
Former Harris County Judge Jon Lindsay
Former Jim Hogg County Commissioner Humberto D. Martinez
Former La Salle County Judge Leodoro Martinez Jr.
Former Uvalde County Judge William R. "Bill" Mitchell
Former Victoria County Judge Don Pozzi
Former Wilson County Judge Marvin Quinney
Former Burleson County Judge Charles J. Sebesta Jr.
Former Dimmit County Commissioner Donald Frank Urban
Special Friend: San Patricio County Sheriff Leroy Moody

North & East Texas

Former Lee County Judge Carey Buchanan Boethel

Former Trinity County Commissioner Bill Burton

Former Bowie County Judge James Carlow

Franklin County Commissioner Jerry Cooper

Gregg County Commissioner Danny Craig Sr.

Former Kaufman County Judge Maxine Darst (Flatt)

Former Jasper County Judge Joe Folk

Former Henderson County Commissioner Harold Hammer

Former Grimes County Judge Ira "Bud" Haynie

Former Cherokee County Commissioner Alton John Hicks

Tyler County Commissioner Buck Hudson

Former Bosque County Commissioner Roy Durwood Koonsman

Bosque County Commissioner Ronny Liardon

Former Cherokee County Commissioner Kevin Pierce

Former Somervell County Commissioner Tammy Ray

Former Grimes County Judge and Commissioner Larry Snook

Former Anderson County Commissioner Truman Starr

Former Dallas County Judge Mary Teresa Tolle

Former Grayson County Commissioner Johnny Waldrip

Former Angelina County Judge Claude E. Welch

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the County Judges and Commissioners Association of Texas members pause for a moment of silence and meditation to honor the memory of these respected individuals.

5. Opposition to Unfunded Mandates

WHEREAS, Texas counties are responsible for the operation and management of many and various governmental programs as required or authorized by state law; and

WHEREAS, some county government programs are fully or partially supported with funds disbursed by the State of Texas pursuant to the state appropriations process; and

WHEREAS, the State of Texas, acting through the Texas Legislature or through a state agency or executive order, may enact laws or promulgate rules that have the effect of imposing mandatory financial obligations upon Texas counties; and

WHEREAS, the State of Texas, through the Texas Legislature or through a state agency or executive order, mandates that counties implement certain governmental programs or perform certain duties and obligations including financial commitments by a county to expend county funds in connection therewith; and

WHEREAS, every unfunded mandate results in a mandatory increase in property taxes; and

WHEREAS, during each regular session of the Texas Legislature, all state funds that support county programs are reviewed through the state appropriation process and by other state budgetary review systems; and

WHEREAS, the aforementioned review process may result in a reduction, or cessation, of state financial support of county government programs causing an unforeseeable disruption and reduction of the county budget and operations; and

WHEREAS, Texas counties cannot achieve reliable financial planning and the necessary bond ratings sufficient to support county-related obligations when the state mandates a new program that is not fully funded or under conditions where the state reduces or fully withdraws prior funding and disbursement for county government programs;

NOW, THEREFORE, the County Judges and Commissioners Association of Texas and its current member counties do hereby resolve that for the foregoing reasons, it is in the best interests of Texas counties and their taxpayers to support and favor the passage of legislation in the form of an amendment to the Constitution of the State of Texas that would expressly prohibit the imposition of a mandatory governmental program on Texas counties, whether by an act of the Texas Legislature or a state agency or by executive order, unless the State of Texas has fully funded and disbursed all necessary funds to enable Texas counties to operate said governmental program.

6. Support for Local Decision-Making and Opposition to Revenue Caps

WHEREAS, 52 percent of the average taxpayer's property tax burden is due to school taxes while only 16 percent is due to county taxes; and

WHEREAS, revenue caps diminish local decision-making and tie the hands of county officials and limit their ability to provide essential services to address the needs and emergencies of their citizens; and

WHEREAS, county government is already struggling to meet the demands of under-funded and unfunded state mandates such as backlogs of state prison inmates, mental health patients, and felony juvenile offenders; emergency management programs; appointed attorneys in CPS cases; indigent health care and indigent defense; and federal mandates such as the Help America Vote Act and the Clean Air Act; and

WHEREAS, the demands on county budgets continue to increase including health care, motor fuel, road materials, and all other products and services purchased by counties; and

WHEREAS, artificial revenue caps result in a shift of taxes from fluctuating properties, such as volatile mineral values, to those remaining relatively stable in value, such as residential properties; and

WHEREAS, additional revenue caps will result in a severe impact on essential county services including public safety and transportation infrastructure; and

WHEREAS, it is inequitable for the Texas Legislature to impose additional revenue caps on local governments without alternative funding sources and unfunded mandate relief;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the County Judges and Commissioners Association of Texas does hereby express its opposition to limits to local decision-making and does hereby oppose any further unreasonable revenue caps upon Texas counties, and the County Judges and Commissioners Association of Texas expresses its deep appreciation to all legislators who oppose these unsound measures.

7. County Local Option Revenue Sources

WHEREAS, county revenue sources are extremely limited; and

WHEREAS, under current statutes, counties are forced to rely upon property taxes to fund necessary services; and

WHEREAS, county taxpayers should have the option to adopt a local sales tax, a local severance tax, a local motor fuel tax, an increase in local vehicle registration fees, and other revenue sources to reduce property taxes;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the County Judges and Commissioners Association of Texas requests that the Legislature amend the tax statutes to allow the adoption of a county local option sales tax, a county hotel occupancy tax, a local option severance tax, a local option motor fuel tax, an increase in local vehicle registration fees, and other revenue sources for the reduction of property taxes without imposing any additional revenue caps.

8. State Funds for Indigent Criminal Defense and Magistration Costs

WHEREAS, the right to assistance by legal counsel is guaranteed by the U.S. Constitution; and

WHEREAS, the State of Texas is required to implement this right and provide legal counsel to indigent criminal defendants; and

WHEREAS, the Texas Fair Defense Act, adopted by the Texas Legislature in 2001, implements this right and requires certain procedures and attorney appointments; and

WHEREAS, the Texas Legislature has failed to provide sufficient funding to offset the additional costs of the Fair Defense Act and has shifted this cost to county taxpayers; and

WHEREAS, county expenditures for indigent criminal defense have increased over 200 percent since the adoption of the Fair Defense Act; and

WHEREAS, the state funding is totally inadequate, providing approximately 10 percent of the indigent defense costs and none of the costs for criminal magistration and bail proceedings; and

WHEREAS, indigent criminal defense and criminal magistration are state responsibilities that should be adequately funded on a statewide basis, not a burden overwhelmingly borne by local property taxpayers; and

WHEREAS, the recent passage of legislation to require additional bail bond proceedings has increased the costs to local taxpayers without state funding;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the County Judges and Commissioners Association of Texas does hereby request that the Texas Legislature fully fund the cost of indigent criminal defense, which has cost local taxpayers over \$4.2 billion from 2001 through 2025, and fully fund the additional cost for criminal magistration imposed by the Special Session of the 87th Texas Legislature.

9. State Funds for Indigent Representation in Child Protective Services Cases

WHEREAS, Texas counties are mandated by state law to provide legal representation for indigent parents, children, guardians, or any individual withstanding in Child Protective Services (CPS) cases; and

WHEREAS, counties across the State of Texas reported spending over \$64 million in Fiscal Year 2025 to fulfill these state-mandated legal requirements, a financial burden borne entirely by local property taxpayers; and

WHEREAS, the cost of legal representation in CPS cases continues to rise due to the increasing complexity of litigation, the shortage of qualified attorneys in rural areas, and the necessity of early legal intervention to prevent children from entering the foster care system;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the County Judges and Commissioners Association of Texas does hereby request that the Texas Legislature establish a formula grant program and fully fund the cost for Family Protection Representation, which has cost county property tax payers over \$244 million from 2021 through 2025.

10. Opposition to Granting Powers to Municipal Utility Districts and Special Utility Districts

WHEREAS, Texas is one of the fastest-growing states in the Union; and

WHEREAS, city government and county government should have appropriate authority to regulate growth in their respective counties and cities; and

WHEREAS, special water districts and private water corporations have the means to furnish water and provide for growth in rural areas of the counties; and

WHEREAS, municipal utility districts and special utility districts have been improperly used by certain developers to avoid compliance with county and city infrastructure plans;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the County Judges and Commissioners Association of Texas opposes the granting of additional powers to municipal utility districts, special utility districts, and any special districts, and requests that the approval of the county be required before any further districts are created.

11. Support for County Road Grant Fund

WHEREAS, constitutional amendments have been approved by the voters to increase dedicated funding for public roadways; and

WHEREAS, these constitutional amendments provide additional funding to be used only for constructing, maintaining, and acquiring right of way for public roadways other than toll roads; and

WHEREAS, these constitutional amendments provide needed support for public highways without increasing taxes; and

WHEREAS, the county road system is eligible for assistance from this funding; and

WHEREAS, county roads are being devastated by overweight trucks to enhance the production of oil and gas; and

WHEREAS, the oil and gas severance tax should be equitably shared with counties to repair this damage; and

WHEREAS, the Economic Stabilization (Rainy Day) Fund has reached record levels through deposits from the oil and gas severance tax; and

WHEREAS, the appropriations from the Rainy Day Fund can be utilized to fund the repair and rehabilitation of county roads;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the County Judges and Commissioners Association of Texas does hereby express appreciation for the additional funding appropriated to support the county road grant program and requests continued support for the county road system.

12. Sludge Waste and Biosolids Disposal

WHEREAS, human waste, food waste, and other toxic materials are contained in municipal, domestic, and commercial sludge and biosolids; and

WHEREAS, this sludge and biosolids waste contains harmful bacteria, viruses, and chemicals that may contaminate local water supplies; and

WHEREAS some sludge and biosolids waste contains PFAS more harmful than bacteria and viruses and comingles with chemicals that have and will continue to contaminate water supplies in not only municipalities but as well as private water wells due to runoff from land application; and

WHEREAS, the current rules of the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality are inadequate to protect the water supply and adjacent landowners from the improper disposal of sludge and biosolids waste; and

WHEREAS, disposal of these materials should be a matter of local regulation;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the County Judges and Commissioners Association of Texas hereby requests more oversight and regulation of the land application of harmful substances in sludge waste and biosolids, and that no permits be issued for the disposal of sludge and biosolids waste without the approval of the Commissioners Court, and that the Texas Legislature clearly authorize local control of all sludge and biosolids waste permits.

13. Fireworks Regulations

WHEREAS, counties currently have limited authority to regulate fireworks; and

WHEREAS, due to the continued danger of drought and the concern for public safety, such regulations are necessary to protect life and property;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the County Judges and Commissioners Association of Texas is opposed to any legislative action that would remove or limit current county authority to regulate fireworks.

14. Oil and Gas Waste Disposal Facilities

WHEREAS, the Texas oil and gas industry is a vital part of our economy; and

WHEREAS, this industry requires the use of disposal facilities to operate in an efficient manner; and

WHEREAS, the operation of these disposal facilities can pose a substantial risk to the groundwater supply; and

WHEREAS, protection of the groundwater is also essential to the economy and health and safety of Texas citizens; and

WHEREAS, adequate information should be provided to Texas counties and their citizens to ensure the safe operation of oil and gas waste facilities and protection of the groundwater;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the County Judges and Commissioners Association of Texas does hereby request that the Texas Legislature and the Texas Railroad Commission require that Texas counties, their citizens, and groundwater conservation districts be provided all available information concerning proposed oil and gas waste facilities in their area and a full opportunity to participate in the evaluation of any application for additional facilities; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Texas Railroad Commission be required to evaluate and consider the full local infrastructure impact and effect on local communities before voting on any such permit.

15. County Homestead Exemption

WHEREAS, the current constitutional provisions limit the ability of counties to a percentage of the appraised value of homesteads; and

WHEREAS, the current limitations prevent the adoption of a homestead exemption to provide greater benefit to lower-priced properties; and

WHEREAS, additional discretion should be granted to counties to determine the homestead exemption;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the County Judges and Commissioners Association of Texas requests that a constitutional amendment be adopted to allow counties to grant discretionary homestead exemptions based upon a dollar amount of the taxable value of the property.

16. Optional County Road and Bridge Fee

WHEREAS, the current maximum county optional road and bridge fee has been frozen at \$10 since 1991; and

WHEREAS, the cost of construction and maintenance of the county road system has increased tremendously in recent years; and

WHEREAS, as the population of Texas continues to grow, the need for efficient county transportation systems will increase;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the County Judges and Commissioners Association of Texas requests that the maximum county optional road and bridge fee be raised to \$20 per vehicle.

17. County Election Security and Costs

WHEREAS, the integrity of elections is fundamental to democracy and the functioning of government; and

WHEREAS, free and fair elections are essential to the principles of representation and accountability; and

WHEREAS, the increasing threats to election security, including cyberattacks, misinformation campaigns, and other forms of interference, pose significant risks to the electoral process; and

WHEREAS, adequate funding is necessary to ensure that election systems are secure, reliable, and up-to-date, including investments in technology, training, and infrastructure; and

WHEREAS, state and local election officials require resources to develop and implement effective security measures, conduct risk assessments, and provide education to the public on the electoral process; and

WHEREAS, many jurisdictions, particularly in rural areas, may face unique challenges and resource constraints that require targeted support from state and federal governments; and

WHEREAS, robust funding for elections supports voter accessibility and participation, ensuring that all citizens have the opportunity to exercise their right to vote;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the County Judges and Commissioners Association of Texas requests that the state implement additional funding for elections and election security to protect the integrity of our electoral process and continue the use of local choices including the use of election administrators and countywide polling.

18. Limitations on Registered Sex Offenders in Counties

WHEREAS, home rule municipalities have the authority by ordinance to provide for the public safety of their citizens to restrict a registered sex offender from going in, on, or within a specified distance of a child safety zone in the municipality; and

WHEREAS, general law municipalities now have the authority with the passage of HB 1111, enacted by the 85th Texas Legislature, effective September 1, 2017, to provide for the public safety of their citizens to restrict a registered sex offender from going in, on, or within a specified distance of a child safety zone in the municipality; and

WHEREAS, Texas counties should also be able to provide for the public safety of their citizens living outside the boundaries of any municipality by restricting a registered sex offender from going in, on, or within a specified distance of a child safety zone in the county; and

WHEREAS, no current statute authorizes a Texas county to enact an ordinance or order establishing a “Child Safety Zone” and restricting a registered sex offender from going in, on, or within a specified distance of a child safety zone in the county; and

WHEREAS, legislation is necessary to authorize counties to enact an ordinance or order to provide public safety for its citizens by placing limitations on registered sex offenders in the county;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the County Judges and Commissioners Association of Texas respectfully requests that the Texas Legislature pass legislation providing Texas counties the authority to enact an ordinance or order regarding limitations on registered sex offenders in counties.

19. Opposition to Efforts to Prohibit County Legislative Communications

WHEREAS, certain legislative proposals would prohibit the use of county funds to retain experts, consultants, and lobbyists to influence legislation, pay dues to associations that influence legislation, and to reimburse county officials for influencing legislation; and

WHEREAS, any bills that would prohibit the use of county funds would effectively silence the voice of local officials and prevent effective communication and representation of their citizens and taxpayers; and

WHEREAS, county officials require the ability to collectively develop and express their positions and information through associations; and

WHEREAS, the inability to retain experienced representation before the federal and state legislative bodies and agencies would place our communities at a distinct disadvantage in efforts to obtain and retain federal and state projects and military bases; and

WHEREAS, smaller counties especially need to be able to combine their resources to efficiently and effectively present their unique issues to state and federal government; and

WHEREAS, requiring elected officials to personally expend personal resources to present the views of their citizens would impose an extreme hardship upon these public servants; and

WHEREAS, such prohibition would stifle the basic tenets of democracy and open government;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the County Judges and Commissioners Association of Texas does hereby express its opposition to any legislation that attempts to silence the combined voices of the county officials of this state.

20. Damage to County Roads by Oil and Gas Activity

WHEREAS, counties impacted by oil and gas activity experience significant and costly damages to the county road system; and

WHEREAS, the Texas Legislature has created the County Transportation Infrastructure Fund (CTIF) which has received two appropriations from the state revenues; and

WHEREAS, local tax revenue must be appropriated to repair the damages when the CTIF grant appropriation is insufficient; and

WHEREAS, the 86th Texas Legislature enacted Senate Bill 2 which restricts property tax revenue growth and provides for a local referendum on property tax increases; and

WHEREAS, the needs of the oil and gas industry may not be met, and public safety may deteriorate if local elections for tax revenue increases are vetoed by local taxpayers;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the County Judges and Commissioners Association of Texas hereby requests that the Texas Legislature relieve local taxpayers of the burden of repairing county roads damaged by oil and gas activity by enacting a permanent statewide funding solution for repairing the damage to county roads caused by oil and gas activity.

21. County Land Use Authority

WHEREAS, counties have no significant land use authority; and

WHEREAS, substandard and obnoxious development can reduce the value and investment of adjacent property owners; and

WHEREAS, counties should have a limited ability to protect the current landowners and public health and safety; and

WHEREAS, appropriate development is inhibited and discouraged by substandard and inappropriate development;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the County Judges and Commissioners Association of Texas requests that the Texas Legislature grant limited local option authority to Texas counties to ensure more compatible development within the county to protect our landowners and public health and safety, and prevent overuse of natural resources, such as ground and surface water.

22. Support for State Funding for Water Infrastructure and Management

WHEREAS, access to clean and safe water is essential for public health, agricultural productivity, economic development, and ecological sustainability; and

WHEREAS, many communities across our state are experiencing significant challenges related to aging water infrastructure, water scarcity, and contamination issues; and

WHEREAS, investing in water infrastructure and management is crucial for ensuring that all residents have reliable access to safe drinking water, adequate sanitation, and resilient water supplies; and

WHEREAS, state funding for water initiatives can promote sustainability and support job creation in the water sector; and

WHEREAS, supportive funding at the state level can empower local governments, utilities, and organizations to implement effective water conservation practices, repair and replace outdated infrastructure, and adopt innovative water management solutions; and

WHEREAS, coordinated efforts to secure additional state funding for water projects can lead to improved water quality, increased access to water services, and better preparedness for future water-related challenges;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the County Judges and Commissioners Association of Texas strongly urges the Texas Legislature to prioritize and allocate increased funding for water infrastructure, management, and conservation efforts throughout the state.

23. Rural Public Transit

WHEREAS, 36 Rural Transit Districts serve all the counties throughout Texas; and

WHEREAS, Rural Transit Districts provide access to needed goods and services, jobs, and medical services throughout the rural counties of Texas; and

WHEREAS, Rural Transit Districts traveled 36,778,915 miles and provided 4,082,509 one-way trips to the citizens of rural Texas in FY 2024; and

WHEREAS, funding opportunities for large federal and state grants have historically left qualified rural projects underfunded; and

WHEREAS, without increased funding to meet increasing service demands and costs in rural areas, services to those most in need in rural Texas will suffer;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the County Judges and Commissioners Association of Texas expresses its support for a meaningful increase in funding for Rural Transit Districts.

24. Uranium Mining Regulation

WHEREAS, uranium mining creates a special hazard for local groundwater; and

WHEREAS, uranium mining places a high demand upon local groundwater resources; and

WHEREAS, groundwater pollution by uranium mining cannot be recovered or rehabilitated and creates a permanent loss of groundwater; and

WHEREAS, county and groundwater conservation districts have very limited power to regulate uranium mining under current law;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the County Judges and Commissioners Association of Texas requests that state law be amended to require a due process permit proceeding and approval by the local Commissioners Court and groundwater conservation district before any permit is granted for uranium mining.

25. Advocating For Sustained State and Federal Funding, Cooperation, and Enhanced Surveillance to Prevent the Re-establishment of the New World Screwworm in the United States

WHEREAS, the New World Screwworm (NWS), *Cochliomyia hominivorax*, is a devastating animal parasite whose larvae feed on the living flesh of all warm-blooded animals, including livestock, domestic pets, wildlife, and humans, causing severe myiasis, suffering, and often death; and

WHEREAS, NWS was successfully eradicated from the United States in 1966 through the monumental efforts of state and federal agencies utilizing the Sterile Insect Technique (SIT); and

WHEREAS, the threat of reintroduction is now realized with infiltration into multiple counties across the state; and

WHEREAS, the reintroduction of NWS poses a grave ecological threat to native wildlife; and

WHEREAS, maintaining the biological barrier and the integrity of the SIT-based eradication program is the only proven method to protect the nation's food supply and ecological health; and

WHEREAS, recent federal actions, including the USDA's commitment of funding to construct a domestic sterile fly production facility at Moore Air Base in Texas and the FDA's conditional approval of the first NWS-specific drug treatment, demonstrate the urgent need for a unified, well-resourced response;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the County Judges and Commissioners Association of Texas hereby advocates for and calls upon the respective State and Federal Governments and relevant agencies to adopt and fund the appropriate measures to secure the nation from the New World Screwworm.

26. Juvenile Probation, Commitment, Detention, and Mental Health Funding

WHEREAS, the supervision, treatment, and rehabilitation of juvenile offenders is a core public safety responsibility of the State of Texas under the Texas Juvenile Justice Code; and

WHEREAS, county juvenile probation departments serve nearly all youth referred to juvenile courts statewide and operate the local delivery system for the state's juvenile justice program; and

WHEREAS, state funding for juvenile probation services covers only a portion of system costs, requiring counties to fund approximately 73 percent of all juvenile probation department operations through local taxpayer dollars; and

WHEREAS, counties are responsible for operating local juvenile detention facilities and housing youth awaiting adjudication, placement, or transfer to state-operated facilities; and

WHEREAS, staffing shortages, capacity limitations, and facility closures within the Texas Juvenile Justice Department have resulted in delayed intake and placement backlogs, forcing counties to house state-committed youth at county expense; and

WHEREAS, a majority of justice-involved youth present with serious mental-health, substance-use, and trauma-related needs requiring intensive treatment services; and

WHEREAS, federal findings confirm that state facilities lack sufficient staffing and treatment capacity and that community-based and regional programs closer to home are more effective and better serve youth and public safety; and

WHEREAS, current state funding formulas do not fully reimburse counties for the actual costs of juvenile probation, detention, commitment, and treatment, resulting in an ongoing cost shift to local taxpayers;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the County Judges and Commissioners Association of Texas urges the Texas Legislature to:

1. Fully fund juvenile probation, detention, commitment, and treatment services as a core public safety responsibility of the State of Texas;
2. Provide immediate reimbursement to counties for youth committed to state custody who remain housed in county facilities due to state capacity or staffing limitations;
3. Update state funding formulas to reflect actual caseloads, acuity, and regional service delivery models; and
4. Expand investment in mental health treatment and diversion programs to reduce recidivism and long-term system costs.

27. Mental Health Patients

WHEREAS, Texas counties are being required to house individuals who have been found incompetent to stand trial and committed to state custody, yet remain in county jails for extended periods due to a lack of available state hospital beds; and

WHEREAS, these individuals are often held for months and, in some cases, up to two years awaiting transfer, effectively requiring counties to serve as de facto state mental health facilities; and

WHEREAS, the cost to local taxpayers for housing these state-responsibility individuals is estimated at approximately \$630 million annually, representing a significant shift of financial burden from the state to counties; and

WHEREAS, county jails are not designed or equipped to provide appropriate mental health treatment, increasing the risk of self-harm, staff injury, and harm to other inmates, while also exposing counties to significant legal and operational risk; and

WHEREAS, prolonged wait times for state hospital admission delay court proceedings, contribute to jail overcrowding, and undermine the timely administration of justice; and

WHEREAS, recent refusals by state facilities to accept additional court-ordered patients further exacerbate this backlog without providing financial relief or alternative solutions to counties;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the County Judges and Commissioners Association of Texas calls upon the State of Texas to:

1. Assume financial responsibility for individuals committed to state mental health facilities by reimbursing counties for the full cost of incarceration from the date of commitment;
2. Increase state hospital and step-down capacity to reduce wait times and ensure timely admission;
3. Establish enforceable timelines for the transfer of committed individuals into state custody; and
4. Provide dedicated funding for diversion and competency restoration programs that reduce reliance on county jail beds.

28. Support of Limited Regulatory Authority of Emerging Technologies Including Data Centers and Battery Storage Facilities

WHEREAS, Texas is a premier destination for innovation and our counties have long welcomed the tax base and economic growth that accompany digital and energy infrastructure; and

WHEREAS, the scale of emerging technologies has shifted from modest facilities to "gigawatt-scale" campuses, creating a regulatory gap at the county level that has become a significant liability for residents; and

WHEREAS, counties have no significant land use authority; and

WHEREAS, the 24/7 operation of large-scale cooling fans and backup generators creates low-frequency noise pollution, while large-scale battery installations present unique public safety challenges, including specialized emergency response requirements, impacting the health and property values of neighboring families; and

WHEREAS, a single data center facility can consume millions of gallons of water per day for evaporative cooling, and the potential for chemical runoff (in the event of a fire) from battery sites threatens local aquifers and utility resources in counties already managing depleted groundwater levels; and

WHEREAS, the frequent use of non-disclosure agreements (NDAs) prevents public transparency, leading to community distrust and unnecessary litigation when residents learn of massive projects only after permits are issued;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the County Judges and Commissioners Association of Texas requests that the Texas Legislature grant counties limited and specific authority to regulate emerging technologies including data center and battery energy storage developments including but not limited to the following:

1. Reasonable Buffer Zones & Noise Mitigation: Authority to mandate minimum setback requirements and sound-attenuation standards for facilities including battery enclosures, on-site power generation facilities, and cooling units adjacent to residential or agricultural zones to protect the "quiet enjoyment" of Texas homes.
2. Water Availability & Resource Protection: Authority to require a certified Water Impact Statement and Environmental Safety Plan for large-load industrial users and/or producers granting counties the standing to negotiate water usage limits, alternative cooling

technologies, or containment strategies for hazardous materials if a project threatens local water security, soil health, or agriculture sustainability.

3. Mandatory Public Hearing Process: Requirement for a public hearing process for any data center or battery storage facility exceeding a specific megawatt (MW) or megawatt-hour (MWh) threshold to ensure community engagement, coordination with local first responders, and a predictable path for development.

29. Support for Expedited Process to Protect Consistent and Predictable Tax Rolls

WHEREAS, the timely and accurate appraisal of mineral interest and industrial property is essential to the fiscal stability of the various taxing entities therein, including counties; and

WHEREAS, protracted litigation regarding property tax valuations under the Texas Tax Code, specifically involving high-valued mineral interests and industrial plants, has created significant budgetary uncertainty for local government operations; and

WHEREAS, Texas Tax Code Section 42.08 (b)(1) requires property owners to pay the portion of the taxable value that is not in dispute during the pendency of an appeal, yet the long-term resolution of these funds remains stalled in the judicial system for years; and

WHEREAS, there is no incentive for the property owners to settle the claim during the pendency of the protest because the property owners are not subject to penalties or interest; and

WHEREAS, the current backlog of appraisal disputes places an undue burden on both the county and local taxpayers who rely on consistent and predictable tax rolls; and

WHEREAS, an expedited judicial or administrative process for resolving high-stakes mineral and industrial appraisal disputes would serve the interests of transparency and governmental efficiency;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the County Judges and Commissioners Association of Texas supports the implementation of an expedited process for the resolution of property tax disputes involving complex mineral interests and large-scale industrial assets.

30. Statewide Adjustment to the 9-1-1 Service Fee

WHEREAS, the provision of 9-1-1 emergency communications services is a fundamental and critical public safety function; and

WHEREAS, the current 9-1-1 service fee of \$.50 per month was established in 1997 and has not been adjusted to keep pace with inflation, rising operational costs, or technological advancements; and

WHEREAS the Texas Legislature in 2021 mandated implementation of Next Generation 9-1-1 statewide by September 2025, requiring the transition from legacy analog systems to secure, IP-based networks capable of routing voice, text, data, and other multimedia communications; and

WHEREAS, most states have increased their 9-1-1 fees to reflect modern operational realities, with only a small minority of states maintaining fees at \$.50 per month or less and many charging significantly higher amounts; and

WHEREAS, the revenue generated by the current fee structure is no longer sufficient to cover the escalating costs of maintaining, upgrading, and staffing our emergency communications infrastructure; and

WHEREAS, a proposed increase of the 9-1-1 service fee will provide a dedicated, sustainable revenue stream exclusively used to fund emergency communications equipment, technology upgrades, and personnel costs;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the County Judges and Commissioners Association of Texas does hereby express its support for legislative action to adjust the statewide wireless 9-1-1 service fee to a level that reflects the true cost of providing resilient, Next Generation 9-1-1 services and provides an ongoing automatic methodology for adjustment based on the Consumer Price Index (CPI).

County Judges and Commissioners Association of Texas

Resolutions Committee

Victoria County Judge Ben Zeller - Chairman

Bell County Judge David Blackburn

Caldwell County Judge Hoppy Haden

Grayson County Commissioner Josh Marr

Irion County Commissioner Tia Paxton

Lamb County Judge James "M." Mike DeLoach

Medina County Judge Keith Lutz

In addition to the above-adopted resolutions, the County Judges and Commissioners Association of Texas Resolutions Committee requests that the following items be recommended for future study and consideration.

1. State funding to fully implement all state recommendations for adequate school security.
2. State funding to meet county cost of transport, autopsy, and disposition of dead bodies.
3. Maintain local control and recovery of cost of reproduction of clerk's digitized records and e-filing.
4. Require vehicles to reduce speed and/or yield a traffic lane to county road and bridge vehicles and equipment.
5. Require Commissioners Court representation on Regional Water Planning Groups.
6. Continue full funding for the Texas Historic Courthouse Preservation Grant Program.
7. State funding for all state special elections.
8. Additional funding for sales tax support on fireworks dedicated for local use.
9. More local authority on the regulation of fireworks.
10. Additional county authority over vehicle inspection and licensing procedures.
11. Local retention of asset forfeiture funds.
12. Prohibit abuse of the Public Information Act by excessive and burdensome requests.
13. Support and restore county authority to regulate all county buildings and property.
14. Support full state funding for lost revenue from disabled veterans and surviving spouses exemption.
15. Review of the equity of ad valorem tax exemptions, tax rate calculation, and the property appraisal process to facilitate a more equitable tax system.
16. Allow the county to retain the child protection and family preservation fees for distribution to family and child agencies unless the city requests its distribution.
17. Allow for the return of the 2 percent fireworks sales tax to the county to distribute to its volunteer fire departments.
18. Broaden the use of the Texas Forest Service insurance fund to assist volunteer fire departments with equipment and buildings.
19. Prohibit the inclusion of optional road and bridge and other elective taxes and interest and sinking fund taxes in Tax Increment Financing agreements and projects.

20. Redistribute the cost for special probate judge appointments to assess the cost against the estate when feasible.
21. Reimburse the county for the actual transport expense of female prisoners to TDCJ facilities.
22. Authorize counties to investigate the criminal record of cybersecurity contract employees.
23. Authorize Commissioners Court to deny plat applications for unresolved prior subdivision violations.
24. Oppose the use of eminent domain and public funding for mandatory high speed rail transportation and require full transparency for all such projects.
25. Support a local option timber severance fee.
26. Oppose any additional increase in truck weight limits and support local option weight limit controls on county roads.
27. Enable counties to fully evaluate and implement safety protocols for the land application and/or disposal of animal waste, food waste, raw sewage waste, produced water, and other substances that may create environmental or health concerns.
28. Financial support from the state for emergency shelters for victims of domestic violence.
29. Request full funding, staffing, and equipping of the DPS labs to return results in the required legal time to serve justice.
30. Study Senate Bill 2073 passed by the 89th Texas Legislature and its unintended consequences including unfunded mandates.
31. Study the need for reform of the property appraisal system as adopted by the Texas Legislature.