



SB 1 and HB 4 Threaten Public Safety and Health Care

Dear Senators and Representatives:

SB 1 and HB 4 impose budget restrictions on cities and counties that endanger public safety and health care for all Texans.

SB 1 and HB 4 make maintaining the public health and safety infrastructure in a growing state more challenging. Cities, counties, EMS districts, and fire districts rely on property taxes to fund first response and emergency care services. SB 1 and HB 4 weaken local decisions to expand a police department, buy new fire trucks, fully equip ambulances, improve first responder training or provide trauma care. These funding restrictions threaten to degrade services, slow response times and put lives at risk.

SB 1 and HB 4 harm health care. Public and private hospitals depend on additional funding made possible by local property taxes. Local funding contributes more to Medicaid hospital payments than state general revenue. Underfunded rural hospitals and other essential health services are dependent on local funds for support of critical programs like public health crisis response and trauma centers.

SB 1 and HB 4 are an even more serious threat for rural Texas, where governmental entities work with a very low tax base. Maintaining rural health and public safety net infrastructure (e.g., trying to keep a rural hospital open or trying to hire more officers in a small community with rising crime) will be more challenging as the ability to fund these essential items would be severely limited by the legislation's proposed revenue cap.

SB 1 and HB 4 mandate a fundamental shift from the current system that empowers communities to identify and address local health care and public safety needs. The current approach works best for a large and diverse state such as Texas. SB 1 undermines local decisions and erodes a community's ability to prioritize and address unique public health and safety challenges.

Please oppose SB 1, HB 4 and mandates that threaten public safety and health care.

*Texas Police Chiefs Association of Texas
Texas Municipal Police Association
Combined Law Enforcement Associations of Texas
Sheriffs' Association of Texas
National Fire Marshals Association
Texas Fire Marshal's Association
Texas Fire Chiefs Association
Texas State Association of Fire Fighters*

*Texas EMS Alliance
Texas Organization of Rural & Community Hospitals
Teaching Hospitals of Texas
Texas Conference of Urban Counties
County Judges and Commissioners Association of Texas
Texas Association of Counties
Texas Municipal League*