



March 24, 2021

The Honorable Sen. Judith Zaffirini, District 21  
The Honorable Sen. Donna Campbell, District 25  
The Honorable Rep. John Cyrier, District 17  
The Honorable Rep. Erin Zwiener, District 45

*Via electronic mail*

**Re: Opposition to proposed restrictions on the ability of local governments to effectively communicate with our Texas State Legislators and to expend public funds to hire an individual required to register as a lobbyist**

Dear Members of the San Marcos State Delegation:

Thank you for your leadership representing the citizens of San Marcos, Texas. The City is grateful to enjoy a productive, working relationship with each of your offices and, on behalf of all City officials, we look forward to continuing that relationship.

I am writing to you in response to the Texas House State Affairs Committee March 25 hearing regarding governmental entities' ability to employ lobbyists and to express the City's strong opposition to any restrictions on local governments' ability to communicate with the Texas Legislature and state agencies. The City respectfully requests that the delegation oppose **House Bill 749**, **Senate Bill 234**, and **Senate Bill 10** in the current 87th session.

The City of San Marcos desires to actively participate in state government to better represent its residents. The ability for a city to advocate on a variety of issues is dependent on its continued ability to hire professional advocates and to pursue membership in associations such as the Texas Municipal League that help keep the locality apprised of legislative issues relevant to our residents and our organization. Taking this option away hurts our constituents and our ability to effectively advocate in the best interests of our community.

Since most local officials have daily official engagements and full-time jobs, they would be unable to read the more than 7,000 bills received every session and to effectively follow the fast-paced schedule of the Texas Legislature. Our City officials and staff are experts on municipal operations and while they are entrusted with following and responding to legislative issues, they cannot be reasonably expected to also be experts on the Texas Legislature. And conversely, many members of the Texas Legislature have not had experience in local government operations. We need professional advocates to help bridge the knowledge gap and provide you, our lawmakers, the information you need to effectively represent our interests.

For San Marcos, we also utilize contracted advocates at the Federal Legislative level who have assisted us in obtaining more than \$130 million in federal funding since 2009. It's a true partnership and they help our Council and staff represent our local community to the Texas Federal delegation and to federal agencies.

It's disheartening that some interested parties argue that local governments do not have the best interest of our constituents in mind as we participate in the legislative process. The opposite is true. The City of San Marcos' number one priority is to provide its citizens with the best possible level of

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service and to be faithful stewards of our public funds. It's our mission as public administrators and we take it very seriously.

For these reasons, San Marcos respectfully urges you to oppose this legislation that would restrict our ability to effectively advocate before the Legislature and to represent the best interest of our residents within the legislative process.

Thank you for consideration of this matter.

Best regards,



Mayor Jane Hughson  
City of San Marcos  
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Cc: San Marcos City Council Members  
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