

By: Bell of Montgomery

H.B. No. 96

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

1 AN ACT

2 relating to an exemption from ad valorem taxation of the total
3 appraised value of the residence homesteads of certain elderly
4 persons and their surviving spouses.

5 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF TEXAS:

6 SECTION 1. Section 11.13, Tax Code, is amended by amending
7 Subsection (i) and adding Subsections (s) and (t) to read as
8 follows:

9 (i) The assessor and collector for a taxing unit may
10 disregard the exemptions authorized by Subsection (b), (c), (d),
11 ~~[or] (n), (s), or (t) [of this section]~~ and assess and collect a tax
12 pledged for payment of debt without deducting the amount of the
13 exemption if:

14 (1) prior to adoption of the exemption, the taxing
15 unit pledged the taxes for the payment of a debt; and

16 (2) granting the exemption would impair the obligation
17 of the contract creating the debt.

18 (s) In addition to any other exemptions provided by this
19 section, an individual is entitled to an exemption from taxation of
20 the total appraised value of the individual's residence homestead
21 if:

22 (1) the individual is 72 years of age or older; and

23 (2) the individual has received an exemption under
24 this section for the residence homestead for at least the preceding

1 10 years.

2 (t) The surviving spouse of an individual who qualified for
3 an exemption under Subsection (s) is entitled to an exemption from
4 taxation of the total appraised value of the same property to which
5 the deceased spouse's exemption applied if:

6 (1) the deceased spouse died in a year in which the
7 deceased spouse qualified for the exemption;

8 (2) the surviving spouse was 55 years of age or older
9 when the deceased spouse died; and

10 (3) the property was the residence homestead of the
11 surviving spouse when the deceased spouse died and remains the
12 residence homestead of the surviving spouse.

13 SECTION 2. Section 11.42(c), Tax Code, is amended to read as
14 follows:

15 (c) An exemption authorized by Section 11.13(c), ~~(d)~~,
16 or (s), 11.132, 11.133, or 11.134 is effective as of January 1 of
17 the tax year in which the person qualifies for the exemption and
18 applies to the entire tax year.

19 SECTION 3. Sections 11.43(k), (l), (m), (m-2), and (q), Tax
20 Code, as effective January 1, 2024, are amended to read as follows:

21 (k) A person who qualifies for an exemption authorized by
22 Section 11.13(c), ~~(d)~~, or (s) or 11.132 must apply for the
23 exemption no later than the first anniversary of the date the person
24 qualified for the exemption.

25 (l) The form for an application under Section 11.13 must
26 include a space for the applicant to state the applicant's date of
27 birth and, if applicable, the date of birth of the applicant's

1 spouse. Failure to provide the applicant's date of birth does not
2 affect the applicant's eligibility for an exemption under that
3 section, other than an exemption under Section 11.13(c) or (d) for
4 an individual 65 years of age or older or an exemption under Section
5 11.13(s) for an individual 72 years of age or older. Failure to
6 provide the date of birth of the applicant's spouse does not affect
7 the applicant's eligibility for an exemption under Section 11.13 or
8 the applicant's spouse's eligibility for an exemption under that
9 section, other than an exemption under Section 11.13(q) for the
10 surviving spouse of an individual 65 years of age or older or an
11 exemption under Section 11.13(t) for the surviving spouse of an
12 individual 72 years of age or older.

13 (m) Notwithstanding Subsections (a) and (k), if a person who
14 receives an exemption under Section 11.13, other than an exemption
15 under Section 11.13(c) or (d) for an individual 65 years of age or
16 older or an exemption under Section 11.13(s) for an individual 72
17 years of age or older, in a tax year becomes 65 or 72 years of age in
18 the next tax year, as applicable, the person is entitled to receive
19 and the chief appraiser shall allow an exemption under Section
20 11.13(c) or (d) for an individual 65 years of age or older or an
21 exemption under Section 11.13(s) for an individual 72 years of age
22 or older, as applicable, in that next tax year on the same property
23 without requiring the person to apply for or otherwise request the
24 exemption if the person's age is shown by:

25 (1) information in the records of the appraisal
26 district that was provided to the appraisal district by the
27 individual in an application for an exemption under Section 11.13

1 on the property or in correspondence relating to the property; or

2 (2) the information provided by the Texas Department
3 of Public Safety to the appraisal district under Section 521.049,
4 Transportation Code.

5 (m-2) Notwithstanding Subsection (a), if a person who
6 receives an exemption under Section 11.13(d) for an individual 65
7 years of age or older or an exemption under Section 11.13(s) for an
8 individual 72 years of age or older dies in a tax year, that
9 person's surviving spouse is entitled to receive an exemption under
10 Section 11.13(q) or (t), as applicable, in the next tax year on the
11 same property without applying for the exemption if:

12 (1) the appraisal district learns of the person's
13 death from any source, including the death records maintained by
14 the vital statistics unit of the Department of State Health
15 Services or a local registration official; and

16 (2) the surviving spouse is otherwise eligible to
17 receive the exemption as shown by:

18 (A) information in the records of the appraisal
19 district that was provided to the appraisal district in an
20 application for an exemption under Section 11.13 on the property or
21 in correspondence relating to the property; or

22 (B) information provided by the Texas Department
23 of Public Safety to the appraisal district under Section 521.049,
24 Transportation Code.

25 (q) A chief appraiser may not cancel an exemption under
26 Section 11.13 that is received by an individual who is 65 years of
27 age or older without first providing written notice of the

1 cancellation to the individual receiving the exemption. The notice
2 must include a form on which the individual may indicate whether the
3 individual is qualified to receive the exemption and a
4 self-addressed postage prepaid envelope with instructions for
5 returning the form to the chief appraiser. The chief appraiser
6 shall consider the individual's response on the form in determining
7 whether to continue to allow the exemption. If the chief appraiser
8 does not receive a response on or before the 60th day after the date
9 the notice is mailed, the chief appraiser may cancel the exemption
10 on or after the 30th day after the expiration of the 60-day period,
11 but only after making a reasonable effort to locate the individual
12 and determine whether the individual is qualified to receive the
13 exemption. For purposes of this subsection, sending an additional
14 notice of cancellation that includes, in bold font equal to or
15 greater in size than the surrounding text, the date on which the
16 chief appraiser is authorized to cancel the exemption to the
17 individual receiving the exemption immediately after the
18 expiration of the 60-day period by first class mail in an envelope
19 on which is written, in all capital letters, "RETURN SERVICE
20 REQUESTED," or another appropriate statement directing the United
21 States Postal Service to return the notice if it is not deliverable
22 as addressed, or providing the additional notice in another manner
23 that the chief appraiser determines is appropriate, constitutes a
24 reasonable effort on the part of the chief appraiser. This
25 subsection does not apply to an exemption under Section 11.13(c) or
26 (d) for an individual 65 years of age or older or an exemption under
27 Section 11.13(s) for an individual 72 years of age or older that is

1 canceled because the chief appraiser determines that the individual
2 receiving the exemption no longer owns the property subject to the
3 exemption.

4 SECTION 4. Section 26.10(b), Tax Code, is amended to read as
5 follows:

6 (b) If the appraisal roll shows that a residence homestead
7 exemption under Section 11.13(c), ~~or~~ (d), or (s), 11.132, 11.133,
8 or 11.134 applicable to a property on January 1 of a year terminated
9 during the year and if the owner of the property qualifies a
10 different property for one of those residence homestead exemptions
11 during the same year, the tax due against the former residence
12 homestead is calculated by:

13 (1) subtracting:

14 (A) the amount of the taxes that otherwise would
15 be imposed on the former residence homestead for the entire year had
16 the owner qualified for the residence homestead exemption for the
17 entire year; from

18 (B) the amount of the taxes that otherwise would
19 be imposed on the former residence homestead for the entire year had
20 the owner not qualified for the residence homestead exemption
21 during the year;

22 (2) multiplying the remainder determined under
23 Subdivision (1) by a fraction, the denominator of which is 365 and
24 the numerator of which is the number of days that elapsed after the
25 date the exemption terminated; and

26 (3) adding the product determined under Subdivision
27 (2) and the amount described by Subdivision (1)(A).

1 SECTION 5. Section 26.112, Tax Code, is amended to read as
2 follows:

3 Sec. 26.112. CALCULATION OF TAXES ON RESIDENCE HOMESTEAD OF
4 CERTAIN PERSONS. (a) Except as provided by Section 26.10(b), if at
5 any time during a tax year property is owned by an individual who
6 qualifies for an exemption under Section 11.13(c), ~~(d)~~, or
7 (s), 11.133, or 11.134, the amount of the tax due on the property
8 for the tax year is calculated as if the individual qualified for
9 the exemption on January 1 and continued to qualify for the
10 exemption for the remainder of the tax year.

11 (b) If an individual qualifies for an exemption under
12 Section 11.13(c), ~~(d)~~, (s), 11.133, or 11.134 with respect
13 to the property after the amount of the tax due on the property is
14 calculated and the effect of the qualification is to reduce the
15 amount of the tax due on the property, the assessor for each taxing
16 unit shall recalculate the amount of the tax due on the property and
17 correct the tax roll. If the tax bill has been mailed and the tax on
18 the property has not been paid, the assessor shall mail a corrected
19 tax bill to the person in whose name the property is listed on the
20 tax roll or to the person's authorized agent. If the tax on the
21 property has been paid, the tax collector for the taxing unit shall
22 refund to the person who was the owner of the property on the date
23 the tax was paid the amount by which the payment exceeded the tax
24 due.

25 SECTION 6. Section 33.01(d), Tax Code, is amended to read as
26 follows:

27 (d) In lieu of the penalty imposed under Subsection (a), a

1 delinquent tax incurs a penalty of 50 percent of the amount of the
2 tax without regard to the number of months the tax has been
3 delinquent if the tax is delinquent because the property owner
4 received an exemption under:

5 (1) Section 11.13 and the chief appraiser subsequently
6 cancels the exemption because the residence was not the principal
7 residence of the property owner and the property owner received an
8 exemption for two or more additional residence homesteads for the
9 tax year in which the tax was imposed;

10 (2) Section 11.13(c) or (d) for a person who is 65
11 years of age or older and the chief appraiser subsequently cancels
12 the exemption because the property owner was younger than 65 years
13 of age; ~~or~~

14 (3) Section 11.13(s) for a person who is 72 years of
15 age or older and the chief appraiser subsequently cancels the
16 exemption because the property owner was younger than 72 years of
17 age; or

18 (4) Section 11.13(q) or (t) and the chief appraiser
19 subsequently cancels the exemption because the property owner was
20 younger than 55 years of age when the property owner's spouse died.

21 SECTION 7. Section 44.004(c), Education Code, is amended to
22 read as follows:

23 (c) The notice of public meeting to discuss and adopt the
24 budget and the proposed tax rate may not be smaller than one-quarter
25 page of a standard-size or a tabloid-size newspaper, and the
26 headline on the notice must be in 18-point or larger type. Subject
27 to Subsection (d), the notice must:

1 (1) contain a statement in the following form:

2 "NOTICE OF PUBLIC MEETING TO DISCUSS BUDGET AND PROPOSED TAX RATE

3 "The (name of school district) will hold a public meeting at
4 (time, date, year) in (name of room, building, physical location,
5 city, state). The purpose of this meeting is to discuss the school
6 district's budget that will determine the tax rate that will be
7 adopted. Public participation in the discussion is invited." The
8 statement of the purpose of the meeting must be in bold type. In
9 reduced type, the notice must state: "The tax rate that is
10 ultimately adopted at this meeting or at a separate meeting at a
11 later date may not exceed the proposed rate shown below unless the
12 district publishes a revised notice containing the same information
13 and comparisons set out below and holds another public meeting to
14 discuss the revised notice." In addition, in reduced type, the
15 notice must state: "Visit Texas.gov/PropertyTaxes to find a link to
16 your local property tax database on which you can easily access
17 information regarding your property taxes, including information
18 about proposed tax rates and scheduled public hearings of each
19 entity that taxes your property.";

20 (2) contain a section entitled "Comparison of Proposed
21 Budget with Last Year's Budget," which must show the difference,
22 expressed as a percent increase or decrease, as applicable, in the
23 amounts budgeted for the preceding fiscal year and the amount
24 budgeted for the fiscal year that begins in the current tax year for
25 each of the following:

26 (A) maintenance and operations;

27 (B) debt service; and

- 1 (C) total expenditures;
- 2 (3) contain a section entitled "Total Appraised Value
3 and Total Taxable Value," which must show the total appraised value
4 and the total taxable value of all property and the total appraised
5 value and the total taxable value of new property taxable by the
6 district in the preceding tax year and the current tax year as
7 calculated under Section 26.04, Tax Code;
- 8 (4) contain a statement of the total amount of the
9 outstanding and unpaid bonded indebtedness of the school district;
- 10 (5) contain a section entitled "Comparison of Proposed
11 Rates with Last Year's Rates," which must:
- 12 (A) show in rows the tax rates described by
13 Subparagraphs (i)-(iii), expressed as amounts per \$100 valuation of
14 property, for columns entitled "Maintenance & Operations,"
15 "Interest & Sinking Fund," and "Total," which is the sum of
16 "Maintenance & Operations" and "Interest & Sinking Fund":
- 17 (i) the school district's "Last Year's
18 Rate";
- 19 (ii) the "Rate to Maintain Same Level of
20 Maintenance & Operations Revenue & Pay Debt Service," which:
- 21 (a) in the case of "Maintenance &
22 Operations," is the tax rate that, when applied to the current
23 taxable value for the district, as certified by the chief appraiser
24 under Section 26.01, Tax Code, and as adjusted to reflect changes
25 made by the chief appraiser as of the time the notice is prepared,
26 would impose taxes in an amount that, when added to state funds to
27 be distributed to the district under Chapter 48, would provide the

1 same amount of maintenance and operations taxes and state funds
2 distributed under Chapter 48 per student in average daily
3 attendance for the applicable school year that was available to the
4 district in the preceding school year; and

5 (b) in the case of "Interest & Sinking
6 Fund," is the tax rate that, when applied to the current taxable
7 value for the district, as certified by the chief appraiser under
8 Section 26.01, Tax Code, and as adjusted to reflect changes made by
9 the chief appraiser as of the time the notice is prepared, and when
10 multiplied by the district's anticipated collection rate, would
11 impose taxes in an amount that, when added to state funds to be
12 distributed to the district under Chapter 46 and any excess taxes
13 collected to service the district's debt during the preceding tax
14 year but not used for that purpose during that year, would provide
15 the amount required to service the district's debt; and

16 (iii) the "Proposed Rate";

17 (B) contain fourth and fifth columns aligned with
18 the columns required by Paragraph (A) that show, for each row
19 required by Paragraph (A):

20 (i) the "Local Revenue per Student," which
21 is computed by multiplying the district's total taxable value of
22 property, as certified by the chief appraiser for the applicable
23 school year under Section 26.01, Tax Code, and as adjusted to
24 reflect changes made by the chief appraiser as of the time the
25 notice is prepared, by the total tax rate, and dividing the product
26 by the number of students in average daily attendance in the
27 district for the applicable school year; and

1 (ii) the "State Revenue per Student," which
2 is computed by determining the amount of state aid received or to be
3 received by the district under Chapters 43, 46, and 48 and dividing
4 that amount by the number of students in average daily attendance in
5 the district for the applicable school year; and

6 (C) contain an asterisk after each calculation
7 for "Interest & Sinking Fund" and a footnote to the section that, in
8 reduced type, states "The Interest & Sinking Fund tax revenue is
9 used to pay for bonded indebtedness on construction, equipment, or
10 both. The bonds, and the tax rate necessary to pay those bonds, were
11 approved by the voters of this district.";

12 (6) contain a section entitled "Comparison of Proposed
13 Levy with Last Year's Levy on Average Residence," which must:

14 (A) show in rows the information described by
15 Subparagraphs (i)-(iv), rounded to the nearest dollar, for columns
16 entitled "Last Year" and "This Year":

17 (i) "Average Market Value of Residences,"
18 determined using the same group of residences for each year;

19 (ii) "Average Taxable Value of Residences,"
20 determined after taking into account the limitation on the
21 appraised value of residences under Section 23.23, Tax Code, and
22 after subtracting all homestead exemptions applicable in each year,
23 other than exemptions available only to disabled persons, ~~or~~
24 persons 65 years of age or older or their surviving spouses, or
25 persons 72 years of age or older or their surviving spouses, and
26 using the same group of residences for each year;

27 (iii) "Last Year's Rate Versus Proposed

1 Rate per \$100 Value"; and

2 (iv) "Taxes Due on Average Residence,"
3 determined using the same group of residences for each year; and

4 (B) contain the following information: "Increase
5 (Decrease) in Taxes" expressed in dollars and cents, which is
6 computed by subtracting the "Taxes Due on Average Residence" for
7 the preceding tax year from the "Taxes Due on Average Residence" for
8 the current tax year;

9 (7) contain the following statement in bold print:
10 "Under state law, the dollar amount of school taxes imposed on the
11 residence of a person 65 years of age or older or of the surviving
12 spouse of such a person, if the surviving spouse was 55 years of age
13 or older when the person died, may not be increased above the amount
14 paid in the first year after the person turned 65, regardless of
15 changes in tax rate or property value.";

16 (8) contain the following statement in bold print:
17 "Notice of Voter-Approval Rate: The highest tax rate the district
18 can adopt before requiring voter approval at an election is (the
19 school district voter-approval rate determined under Section
20 [26.08](#), Tax Code). This election will be automatically held if the
21 district adopts a rate in excess of the voter-approval rate of (the
22 school district voter-approval rate)."; ~~and~~

23 (9) contain a section entitled "Fund Balances," which
24 must include the estimated amount of interest and sinking fund
25 balances and the estimated amount of maintenance and operation or
26 general fund balances remaining at the end of the current fiscal
27 year that are not encumbered with or by corresponding debt

1 obligation, less estimated funds necessary for the operation of the
2 district before the receipt of the first payment under Chapter 48 in
3 the succeeding school year; and

4 (10) contain the following statement in bold print:
5 "Under state law, the residence of a person 72 years of age or older
6 or of the surviving spouse of such a person, if the surviving spouse
7 was 55 years of age or older when the person died, is exempt from
8 taxes."

9 SECTION 8. Section 46.071, Education Code, is amended by
10 adding Subsection (a-3) and amending Subsections (b-2) and (c-2) to
11 read as follows:

12 (a-3) Beginning with the 2025-2026 school year, in addition
13 to state aid a school district is entitled to under Subsection
14 (a-2), a school district is also entitled to additional state aid
15 under this subchapter to the extent that state and local revenue
16 used to service debt eligible under this chapter is less than the
17 state and local revenue that would have been available to the
18 district under this chapter as it existed on September 1, 2024, if
19 the residence homestead exemption for a person 72 years of age or
20 older or the person's surviving spouse under Section 1-b(q),
21 Article VIII, Texas Constitution, as proposed by the 88th
22 Legislature, 4th Called Session, 2023, had not been adopted.

23 (b-2) Subject to Subsections (c-2), (d), and (e),
24 additional state aid under this section beginning with the
25 2023-2024 school year is equal to the amount by which the loss of
26 local interest and sinking revenue for debt service attributable to
27 any increase in a residence homestead exemption under Section

1 1-b(c), Article VIII, Texas Constitution, and any additional
 2 limitation on tax increases under Section 1-b(d) of that article as
 3 proposed by the 88th Legislature, 2nd Called Session, 2023, and the
 4 residence homestead exemption under Section 1-b(g), Article VIII,
 5 Texas Constitution, as proposed by the 88th Legislature, 4th Called
 6 Session, 2023, is not offset by a gain in state aid under this
 7 chapter.

8 (c-2) For the purpose of determining state aid under
 9 Subsection [Subsections] (a-2) or (a-3) [and (b-2)], local interest
 10 and sinking revenue for debt service is limited to revenue required
 11 to service debt eligible under this chapter as of September 1, 2023,
 12 or as of September 1, 2024, respectively, or authorized by the
 13 voters but not yet issued as of September 1, 2023, or as of
 14 September 1, 2024, respectively, that later becomes eligible under
 15 this chapter, including refunding of the applicable [that] debt,
 16 subject to Section 46.061. The limitation imposed by Section
 17 46.034(a) does not apply for the purpose of determining state aid
 18 under Subsection (a-2) or (a-3) [this section].

19 SECTION 9. Section 48.2543, Education Code, is amended by
 20 adding Subsection (a-2) and amending Subsection (b) to read as
 21 follows:

22 (a-2) Beginning with the 2025-2026 school year, in addition
 23 to state aid a school district is entitled to under Subsection
 24 (a-1), a school district is entitled to additional state aid to the
 25 extent that state and local revenue under this chapter and Chapter
 26 49 is less than the state and local revenue that would have been
 27 available to the district under this chapter and Chapter 49 as those

1 chapters existed on September 1, 2024, if the residence homestead
2 exemption for a person 72 years of age or older or the person's
3 surviving spouse under Section 1-b(q), Article VIII, Texas
4 Constitution, as proposed by the joint resolution to add that
5 subsection adopted by the 88th Legislature, 4th Called Session,
6 2023, had not been adopted.

7 (b) The lesser of the school district's currently adopted
8 maintenance and operations tax rate or the adopted maintenance and
9 operations tax rate for:

10 (1) the 2021 tax year is used for the purpose of
11 determining additional state aid under Subsection (a); ~~and~~

12 (2) the 2022 tax year is used for the purpose of
13 determining additional state aid under Subsection (a-1); and

14 (3) the 2024 tax year is used for the purpose of
15 determining additional state aid under Subsection (a-2).

16 SECTION 10. Section 403.302(d-1), Government Code, is
17 amended to read as follows:

18 (d-1) For purposes of Subsection (d), a residence homestead
19 that receives an exemption under Section 11.13(s) or (t), 11.131,
20 11.133, or 11.134, Tax Code, in the year that is the subject of the
21 study is not considered to be taxable property.

22 SECTION 11. The exemptions from ad valorem taxation of a
23 residence homestead authorized by Sections 11.13(s) and (t), Tax
24 Code, as added by this Act, apply only to taxes imposed beginning
25 with the 2025 tax year.

26 SECTION 12. This Act takes effect January 1, 2025, but only
27 if the constitutional amendment proposed by the 88th Legislature,

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1 4th Called Session, 2023, to exempt from ad valorem taxation the
2 total market value of the residence homesteads of certain elderly
3 persons and their surviving spouses is approved by the voters. If
4 that constitutional amendment is not approved by the voters, this
5 Act has no effect.