

**HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
COMPILATION OF PUBLIC COMMENTS**

Submitted to the Committee on Ways & Means
For Hearing Date: Monday, April 21, 2025 1:00 PM
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Note: Comments received by the committee reflect only the view of the individual(s) submitting the comment, who retain sole responsibility for the content of the comment. Neither the committee nor the Texas House of Representatives takes a position on the views expressed in any comment. The committee compiles the comments received for informational purposes only and does not exercise any editorial control over comments.

COMMENTS FOR HB 19 by Meyer

Wes Mays, Mayor
City of Coppell
Coppell, TX

Chairman Meyer and Members of the Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to submit this comment. My name is Wes Mays, and I proudly serve as the Mayor of Coppell. I am writing today in strong opposition to House Bill 19 because it undermines the trust our residents have placed in their local government.

Coppell voters elected their City Council to be responsible stewards of infrastructure and community needs. They've shown support our long-term planning efforts—not only through consistent feedback but also by approving major investments at the ballot box when asked. They've also empowered us to act quickly and responsibly between elections when urgent needs arise. HB 19 strips away that local flexibility and replaces it with rigid timelines and restrictions that don't fit the current realities. This bill would have blocked the Coppell City Council from issuing Certificates of Obligation to build a new fire station, renovate our service center, and reconstruct one of our most important streets. All of these projects are necessary, none of them extravagant, and each one is tied directly to the services our residents depend on daily. They aren't political talking points—they're public safety, mobility, and basic governance.

We govern closest to the people, and that proximity should be protected. State-imposed caps and prohibitions only make it harder for us to do the job we were elected to do. On behalf of our residents, I urge you to oppose HB 19.

Respectfully,
Wes Mays
Mayor, City of Coppell

Calie Willis
City of Coppell
Coppell, TX

Chairman Meyer and Committee Members,

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comment. I'm writing in opposition to HB 19 because of the dangerous constraints it places on how cities plan for long-term infrastructure while maintaining stable service delivery.

HB 19's cap on annual debt service and its exclusion of many lease or short-term notes from being counted in the debt tax rate forces cities to rely heavily on their general fund to pay for essential needs like vehicles, IT systems, and building improvements. The bill limits our ability to balance capital and operational priorities in a responsible, multi-year plan.

Coppell does not operate in a bubble—construction costs rise, needs emerge unexpectedly, and aging infrastructure doesn't wait. By disallowing flexible financing methods, HB 19 puts cities in a position to either delay projects or defund services. Neither outcome serves Texas residents well.

I ask you to trust cities that have proven their fiscal discipline and vote no on HB 19.

Respectfully,
Calie Willis

Ashley Nystrom
City of Waco
Waco, TX

This comment reflects a letter sent by the City of Waco to Rep. Meyer. In summary, we submit these recommendations to address concerns on how some provisions impact local government operations & infrastructure delivery:

Sec. 2 eliminates the option for local governments to hold bond elections in May. We request removing or amending this provision to allow a May election upon unanimous approval of the governing body. A May option provides lower borrowing costs for taxpayers, alleviates ballot fatigue, & enables a timely response to urgent needs.

Sec. 3 the proposed 20% cap on local government debt could restrict cities, especially those with low tax rates & minimal debt, from issuing new bonds. We recommend adopting a 2/3 vote requirement for calling a bond election & issuing bonds, preserving public accountability while allowing responsible financial practices.

Sec. 6 imposes a 5-year moratorium on issuing tax anticipation notes following a failed bond election. We recommend reducing this to 3 years to align with the freeze period for COs. A shorter freeze period accounts for government turnover, changing priorities, & unforeseen needs.

Sec. 8 narrows the definition of "public works" eligible for financing. We recommend refining this definition to focus on essential infrastructure like roads, utilities, & public safety facilities while keeping the ability to renovate administrative buildings.

Sec. 9 significantly narrows allowable CO issuance. We recommend removing it to maintain flexibility in CO issuance while upholding accountability.

Sec. 11 extends the CO issuance freeze to 5 years after a failed bond election. We recommend maintaining the 3-year period, as it already represents a meaningful pause.

Sec. 12 & 13 proposes lowering the voter threshold for a CO election petition from 5% to 2%. We suggest a scalable approach: 2% for jurisdictions with populations over 1- million & 5% for those under 1-million. This adjustment maintains equitable citizen oversight while accounting for practical differences.

Sec. 14 & 15 introduces language requiring the lowest bid for public works contracts & modifies contractor bonding provisions. We recommend removing this language to align with companion legislation & current best practices.

Sec. 16: the bill's language on "minimum dollar amount required" doesn't accommodate variable rate debt obligations or commercial paper programs. We propose revisions allowing flexibility to set tax rates covering obligations associated with these instruments to avoid increased taxpayer costs, protect credit ratings, & ensure access to interim financing tools.

Sec. 20: repeals the definition of "designated infrastructure," requiring that all critical infrastructure financed through non-voter-approved debt be paid using M&O revenue subject to property tax caps. We recommend aligning this definition with the refined "public works" definition elsewhere in the bill.

Thank you.

Kevin Chen
Self
Austin, TX

Hello! My name is Kevin and I'm a constituent of district 37.

I'm commenting to express my strong opposition to HB 19, which I believe would harm the future of cities in Texas.

This bill undermines local control over voter approved projects, limits cities' ability to plan and fund complex infrastructure projects, and negatively impacts growth and economic development in the entire state.

I urge you to vote against this bill and protect our cities' ability to invest in transformational infrastructure for the future of Texas. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Stacey Hawkins
City of Temple
Temple, TX

On behalf of the City of Temple, I write to express serious concerns with House Bill 19. While we support fiscal transparency, this bill imposes sweeping restrictions that would hinder our ability to meet infrastructure needs in a timely, cost-effective, and locally accountable manner.

HB 19 would severely restrict the use of Certificates of Obligation (COs), impose an arbitrary debt cap, and eliminate local flexibility in elections and tax rate planning. These changes undermine essential tools used by cities like Temple to serve growing communities.

1. CO Limitations

HB 19 allows COs only in narrow emergencies, eliminating their use for vital community-driven projects. Temple has used COs to fund public safety infrastructure, mobility improvements, solid waste facilities, and animal shelter expansions—all aligned with long-term planning and community input.

Removing this financing option would delay delivery of essential services and increase costs. It would also restrict access to state and federal infrastructure programs that depend on the flexibility and credit strength of CO-backed financing.

2. Arbitrary Debt Cap

HB 19 prohibits debt issuance if annual service exceeds 20% of the average property tax collections over the past three years. This would penalize cities with conservative fiscal practices or low tax rates and ignore growth-driven infrastructure demands. It may also result in inefficient debt structures with longer maturities and higher long-term costs.

3. Loss of Election Flexibility

The bill mandates all bond and tax elections occur in November, removing the ability to align proposals with construction cycles, budget timelines, or grant deadlines. This inflexibility could delay projects for up to a year and raise costs due to crowded election and bond calendars.

4. Petition Threshold and Repeal of Prior Reforms

Lowering the petition threshold to 2% of registered voters risks allowing small groups to block broadly supported projects. The bill also repeals well-defined statutory categories from HB 1869 that currently allow limited CO use for essential infrastructure.

Conclusion

Cities like Temple are committed to transparency and responsible governance. We urge the Legislature not to impose new constraints that increase costs and delay community priorities. The current legal framework already provides strong public safeguards. We respectfully ask the Committee to reconsider HB 19's most restrictive provisions and preserve the tools cities use to deliver essential services.

Scott Stewart
American Council of Engineering Companies of Texas (ACEC Texas)
AUSTIN, TX

Dear Chairman Meyer and Members of the House Committee on Ways and Means:

The American Council of Engineering Companies of Texas ("ACEC Texas") is the business association of Texas engineering firms, representing over 450 firms and 35,000 employees practicing in a variety of engineering disciplines. We respectfully registered "Neutral" on House Bill 19 by Representative Morgan Meyer today in the House Committee on Ways and Means hearing. We appreciate the Chairman and his team working with us on our concerns on limiting the ability of political subdivisions to issue debt, most notably on projects critical to residents and businesses. The following are those concerns we have been discussing:

1. Removing the May Election Date (SECTION 2, HB 19 as Filed): We recommend keeping the May and November election options to ensure political subdivisions have two opportunities for project financing approval.
2. Maximum Annual Debt Service (SECTION 3, HB 19 as Filed): We believe the 20% threshold in the filed version of the bill is low and causes concern on the potential ability for a political subdivision to finance projects in their entirety. This would severely limit, both large and small, political subdivisions when infrastructure upgrades and needs are necessary.
3. Allocation of Proceeds (SECTION 4, HB 19 as Filed): The concern with this section/language is the time it takes from scoping the project for the proposition, to financing/bond approval, to design, to construction start and completion; and the effects of inflation. The time it takes to get a project scoped, financed, designed, and constructed can be volatile, and ensuring to account for time and inflation is important to consider.
4. Anticipation Notes (AN) (SECTION 6, HB 19 as Filed): We recommend mirroring the contractual obligation language set at 3 years currently for prohibiting the issuance of a AN if the proposition failed to be approved by the voters previously.
5. Certificates of Obligation (CO) (SECTION 9, HB 19 as Filed): A critical issue that local governments can face is the need to increase capacity for residents and customers, whether it be water supply, wastewater treatment, or a transportation project to meet the needs before they become an emergency, or for one of the limited reasons stated in the filed bill. This is usually caused by new residents or customers coming online to use these services and resources. We understand the desire to establish guardrails on this financing tool. However, it does serve an important purpose on delivering critical projects that entities are needing in a very limited timeframe between the May and November elections.
6. Certificates of Obligation (CO) (SECTION 8 & 11, HB 19 as Filed): On list of eligible projects for a CO, we suggest keeping emergency shelters, jails, and juvenile facilities. We also recommend keeping the current 3 year prohibition on COs instead of the proposed 5 year prohibition.

Thank you!

Scott Stewart

Daniella Lopez Valdez
Brownsville ISD
Brownsville, TX

I am submitting this comment in strong opposition to House Bill 19, which would severely limit the ability of school districts like mine—Brownsville ISD, one of the largest and most underfunded school districts in Texas—to responsibly manage local finances and respond to urgent community needs.

HB 19 places unnecessary restrictions on local decision-making and jeopardizes our ability to provide safe, modern learning environments for students.

This bill imposes a 20% bond debt cap based on past tax revenue, which fails to consider enrollment size, long-term infrastructure needs, or local growth trends. For districts like Brownsville ISD, already operating under resource constraints and aging facilities, this arbitrary limit could mean deferring critical safety, maintenance, and technology upgrades that our students desperately need.

Additionally, the prohibition on anticipation notes following a failed bond election is overly punitive. Local voters may reject a bond for many reasons, and circumstances can change rapidly—especially in border communities like ours, which are vulnerable to extreme weather events and public health challenges. The inability to act swiftly through anticipation notes undermines our capacity to keep students and staff safe in times of crisis.

Requiring a 60% vote threshold for tax rate motions is another overreach. It dilutes local governance and could allow a minority to block decisions needed to stabilize district finances—particularly when state support remains inadequate. It also ignores the reality that local boards are directly accountable to their voters and communities.

Brownsville ISD is already 58% underfunded according to a Rice University study. HB 19 will only deepen inequities for students in low-wealth districts while tying the hands of elected officials trying to deliver basic services.

I respectfully urge the committee to oppose HB 19. Local governments—and the communities they serve—deserve the flexibility and tools to invest in their future, not rigid mandates that limit progress.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Alicia Noyola
South Texas Association of Schools
Harlingen, TX

On behalf of the South Texas Association of Schools (STAS)—an organization representing public school districts across South Texas committed to equitable and effective public education—I respectfully submit this written testimony in opposition to House Bill 19. By requiring that all bond elections be held solely on the November uniform election date, HB 19 removes an essential tool from locally elected school boards. School districts need the flexibility to address urgent, time-sensitive infrastructure needs such as:

- Overcrowded classrooms
- Safety and security upgrades
- Modernization outdated facilities
- Replacement of failing systems (e.g., HVAC, roofs)

Limiting bond elections to once per year not only delays necessary improvements, it increases construction costs due to inflation, and may extend the timeline for project completion by months or even years. In fast-growing or aging districts, these delays can have a direct and adverse impact on student learning environments.

Secondly, oversupply in the municipal bond market of requiring all public entities—school districts, cities, and counties—to issue bonds at the same time risks flooding the municipal bond market, creating an oversupply that drives up interest rates. This scenario leads to:

- Higher borrowing costs for taxpayers
- Fewer favorable terms for smaller or lower-rated issuers
- Increased competition for underwriters and legal advisors, potentially delaying closings or increasing transaction costs

Districts that cannot afford to issue at higher rates may be forced to delay or scale back essential projects, creating long-term consequences for school communities.

The districts we represent in South Texas—many of which are rapidly growing or economically disadvantaged—rely heavily on local bond elections to address facilities needs that are not met through state funding mechanisms. HB 19 disproportionately penalizes these communities by:

- Reducing their ability to respond quickly to growth or emergencies
- Forcing competition with larger, better-resourced issuers during peak bond market periods
- Adding barriers to voter engagement by limiting election timing options

Finally, HB 19 imposes an arbitrary 20% cap on annual debt service as a percentage of average property tax collections. This one-size-fits-all cap fails to consider the vastly different circumstances facing school districts across Texas. Local governments need the flexibility to respond to community needs—whether it's building schools, maintaining infrastructure, or ensuring public safety. This bill would significantly reduce their ability to do so.

HB 19 may be well-intentioned, but it risks creating unintended financial burdens, delays in addressing critical student needs, and increased inequality across school districts. We urge lawmakers to preserve local control over election timing and to consider the broader implications this bill would have on the cost and efficiency of public infrastructure investments.

Trevor Brown
City of Coppell - Community Experiences Dep.
Flower Mound, TX

Chairman Meyer and Members of the Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to submit this comment. I am writing in opposition to House Bill 19 because of the lasting harm it will cause to our ability to maintain and expand community facilities that directly serve residents.

Parks and recreation infrastructure—including community centers, trails, and athletic facilities—are more than amenities. They're critical to public health, community cohesion, and even property values. Coppell residents have long prioritized high-quality park services, and our investment has paid off in community engagement and wellness.

HB 19 would prohibit cities like ours from using Certificates of Obligation to renovate aging park facilities or build new ones unless we place those projects on a crowded November ballot. Not every recreation facility project rises to the level of a general obligation bond campaign—but that doesn't mean it isn't important. Delaying improvements to our park system limits access and increases long-term maintenance costs.

We plan responsibly, we host public input sessions, and we respond to what residents ask for. HB 19 takes away our ability to act on that feedback in a timely and effective way. I urge you to vote against this bill and preserve local flexibility to invest in quality-of-life infrastructure.

Respectfully,
Trevor Brown

Liz Morse
Richardson Independent School District
Richardson, TX

Dear Committee Members,

Richardson ISD is deeply concerned about several provisions in HB 19 that could significantly hinder our ability to serve our students and community effectively.

Our understanding of the bill is that if a district's average I&S tax collections over the previous three fiscal years exceed 20% of total tax revenue, the district would be prohibited from issuing new debt. According to the Texas Education Agency's 2023–2024 Summary of Finance, RISD's current I&S ratio stands at 30.6%, with a three-year average of 27.5% — both well above the 20% threshold outlined in HB 19. As tax rates continue to be compressed statewide, this restriction would place even more pressure on the I&S percentage and further limit our flexibility.

If enacted as filed, HB 19 would prevent RISD from issuing the bonds needed to maintain and upgrade our aging infrastructure. Our average school building is over 50 years old. Critical facility needs—such as plumbing, HVAC systems, school buses, security systems, and instructional equipment for Career and Technical Education (CTE) programs—would go unmet. Even more disheartening, the bill would block us from delivering on a major promise: transitioning from junior highs to middle schools, an initiative that impacts 75% of our community and is slated for inclusion in a future bond election.

Without access to I&S funding, we would be forced to rely on Maintenance & Operations (M&O) dollars to cover these essential expenses, which would directly impact our ability to support classroom instruction.

We respectfully request that this section of HB 19 be revised—either by eliminating the 20% cap or increasing it to at least 30% — to allow school districts to responsibly maintain and improve facilities that our communities expect.

Additional concerns with the bill include:

- Requiring bond proceeds to be allocated exactly according to the ballot language percentages, reducing flexibility to address changing needs that may actually spend dollars more effectively.
- Eliminating the May election date for bond elections, which reduces opportunities for voter engagement and timely responses to urgent needs.

We appreciate your attention to these issues and are encouraged to hear that Chairman Meyer is working to strengthen the bill. We remain hopeful that thoughtful revisions will preserve school districts' ability to serve students and meet the expectations of our voters.

Thank you for your time and consideration.
Respectfully, Liz Morse

Drew Wasson

City of Jersey Village, Texas (City Council, position 1)

JERSEY VILLAGE, TX

As a current member of the Jersey Village City Council and a proud resident of our community, I write to express strong opposition to House Bill 19.

This bill represents an overreach into the core fiscal responsibilities of Texas cities. It threatens local control and our ability to responsibly govern and plan for residents' long-term needs.

Jersey Village, now 69 years old, has been recognized for fiscal transparency by the Comptroller and maintains a conservative budget. Our priorities include public safety, flood mitigation, infrastructure, and community building. We offer significant tax exemptions to homeowners, seniors, and the disabled. Until recently, we had strong reserves and were paying down debt—then the pandemic hit.

My greatest concern is with Section 3, which caps debt service at 20% of the average property tax revenue collected over the past three years. This presents major challenges for cities like ours that face:

1. Population growth requiring expanded infrastructure
2. Aging systems—many over 50 years old—needing repair or replacement
3. Infrastructure costs that have more than tripled since 2019.

Previously, we cash-funded one street replacement a year. Today, due to inflation, we can't replace 4 inches of roadway for what a foot cost pre-COVID. A street which cost \$1 million in 2019 now exceeds \$3 million. Debt issuance is required to upgrading our streets and utilities timely and systematically. Without it, we're left with more expensive ad hoc, emergency fixes.

Texas cities lack statutory mechanisms to save for major capital needs. Unlike private businesses, municipalities have limited ability to build reserves, forcing dependence on debt or small surpluses. HB 19 would further restrict our flexibility to meet residents' expectations for safe, reliable infrastructure and services.

Further, the 20% cap fails to consider cities like ours, where sales and property taxes each make up about half of the general fund. Cities with even less reliance on property tax—like Stafford, which has no property tax at all (source)—could be prevented from debt issuance for years, even if they adopted a tax today.

Section 9 compounds the problem by limiting certificates of obligation. Urgent needs, safety mandates, and strategic opportunities don't follow a uniform election schedule. Subsection (a)(1)(A) even discourages cities from proactively addressing compliance issues with state or federal law—delaying critical work and driving up costs.

As local officials, we are closest to our communities. HB 19 imposes a rigid, one-size-fits-all approach that undermines this relationship and harms cities across Texas.

Now more than ever, we must empower—not restrain—local governments. HB 19 strips cities of essential tools and places the future of services under inflexible state control.

I urge the committee and the House to oppose this bill. I would be happy to provide further insight into how this legislation could impact Jersey Village and similar

Michael Land
City of Coppell
Coppell, TX

Chairman Meyer and Committee Members,

My name is Mike Land, and I serve as City Manager for the City of Coppell. I respectfully submit this comment in OPPOSITION to House Bill 19.

One of my roles is look out for the for the future of Coppell—not just for current needs, but for what the needs could be for the next 5, 10, even 20. To meet these needs the City of Coppell requires flexible, reliable financial tools. HB 19 would severely constrain those tools and, in doing so, destabilize the long-term infrastructure planning that communities like Coppell rely on to thrive. Additionally, the 20% limitation on potential debt service language and the amended definition of what no longer constitutes a public works project are troubling on multiple levels related to building a resilient community.

Coppell has maintained a AAA bond rating, not by accident, but by making strategic, conservative choices about when and how to use debt. The city has used Certificates of Obligation to finance projects that are time-sensitive, capital-intensive, and fully vetted through our public process. For example, when public safety needs presented themselves because of the need for a new fire station and an outdated public works service center needed expansion and updating due to our changing work force, the City Council spent months evaluating the projects that included transparent communications, financial forecasts, and architectural assessments—all with the understanding that the City could issue CO's. HB 19 would have retroactively made that effort unworkable.

More troubling is the five-year prohibition on addressing a failed bond proposition. That is the equivalent of municipal paralysis. The world doesn't pause because a bond fails. Infrastructure doesn't wait. Roads don't stop aging. The community's needs don't subside.

Cities that act responsibly should be empowered to continue doing so. I urge you to vote against HB 19 and preserve the city's ability to serve our residents efficiently, safely, and with cost savings at the forefront of its decision making process.

Respectfully,
Mike Land

Abby Sandy
City of Coppell
Coppell, TX

Chairman Meyer and Members of the Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to submit this comment. I am writing in opposition to House Bill 19 because of the lasting harm it will cause to our ability to maintain and expand community facilities that directly serve residents.

Parks and recreation infrastructure—including community centers, trails, and athletic facilities—are more than amenities. They're critical to public health, community cohesion, and even property values. Coppell residents have long prioritized high-quality park services, and our investment has paid off in community engagement and wellness.

HB 19 would prohibit cities like ours from using Certificates of Obligation to renovate aging park facilities or build new ones unless we place those projects on a crowded November ballot. Not every recreation facility project rises to the level of a general obligation bond campaign—but that doesn't mean it isn't important. Delaying improvements to our park system limits access and increases long-term maintenance costs.

We plan responsibly, we host public input sessions, and we respond to what residents ask for. HB 19 takes away our ability to act on that feedback in a timely and effective way. I urge you to vote against this bill and preserve local flexibility to invest in quality-of-life infrastructure.

Respectfully,
Abby Sandy

Cinthia Kopinitz
Self - retired
Jersey Village, TX

As a resident of small town Jersey Village, near Houston, I write to express my strong opposition to House Bill 19, which is currently in review by the House Ways and Means Committee.

This bill represents a significant overreach by the state into the essential fiscal responsibilities of Texas cities. It threatens not only the principle of local control but also our ability to govern responsibly and plan effectively for the long-term needs of our small towns.

Thank you.

Lauren Rodriguez
City of Coppell
Keller, TX

Chairman Meyer and Committee Members,

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comment. I respectfully oppose House Bill 19 due to the unintended financial consequences it could impose on local taxpayers.

Under HB 19, if all cities are forced to rush bond authorizations to the November ballot, the municipal bond market could flood. This increases competition, drives up interest rates, and reduces investor attention for smaller cities like ours. That means higher borrowing costs and more tax dollars spent on interest instead of roads, buildings, or public services.

Additionally, construction inflation doesn't pause for voter approval. Delays caused by HB 19 would mean we pay more for the same projects months or years later. That's not conservative budgeting—it's inefficient and costly.

If the goal is to protect taxpayers, we urge you to consider the real-world impact of HB 19. Sometimes, delay costs more than action.

Respectfully,
Lauren

Josh Schroeder, Mayor
City of Georgetown
Georgetown, TX

I write in strong opposition to HB 19, which would impose harmful restrictions on local governments' ability to manage public finances efficiently and responsibly. While well-intentioned, the bill would significantly increase long-term costs, delay essential infrastructure, and unfairly shift the financial burden of long-term assets onto today's taxpayers. The City of Georgetown has a AAA bond rating from S&P global ratings, the highest level of creditworthiness, and proves we have the extremely strong capacity to meet our financial commitments. This rating helps our residents trust that our council and city staff are making sound, responsible decisions on the issuance of debt. Debt financing is a fiscally responsible tool that ensures all users—current and future—contribute to the cost of vital infrastructure like roads, water systems, and public safety facilities over their useful life. Without it, cities would be forced to either raise taxes significantly or postpone critical projects, undermining both growth and quality of life.

The proposed 20% cap on debt service relative to property tax collections is overly restrictive and unrealistic for fast-growing communities. Cities like Georgetown would be forced to delay vital projects for decades, including the construction of new fire stations, or take on longer-term debt that increases borrowing costs—ultimately costing taxpayers more. HB 19 also blocks voter-approved bonds and restricts Certificates of Obligation, including those supported by non-property tax revenues such as sales tax or TIRZ districts. These are fiscally sound tools that reduce pressure on property taxes and allow for strategic investments without overburdening residents.

By interfering with proven, locally driven financial practices, HB 19 undermines both fiscal discipline and local control. I urge you to reject this bill in favor of a more balanced approach that preserves taxpayer value and respects the right of communities to plan responsibly for the future.

Matthew Arnold
self
Austin, TX

This is an actively harmful bill that would hamstring local governments even further than the state legislature already has. It would not protect taxpayers except for those who were on the losing side of significant ballot measures. The majority of Texans would be harmed by this bill rather than helped.

Karen Felker, Mayor
City of Borger
Borger, TX, TX

Thank you for the opportunity to provide input on H.B. 19. While the City of Borger supports transparency and fiscal responsibility, we must express concern that the provisions of this bill—particularly those limiting debt issuance and constraining use of ad valorem revenue—impose unnecessary burdens on responsibly managed cities and disregard the principle of local control.

Borger is a fiscally conservative community in the Texas Panhandle. In FY 2025, property taxes comprise just 13.7% of our General Fund revenue, and we have decreased our property tax rate below the No New Revenue Rate during 4 of the past 5 years and adopted the No New Revenue Rate the other year. Despite this, 24% of our property tax revenue is committed to debt payments. Our debt portfolio supports critical infrastructure, including roads, utilities, and public safety, often planned through a debt ladder approach that aligns projects with expiring obligations to prevent tax rate spikes and ensure budget stability.

The proposed 20% cap on debt service based on average property tax collections (Section 1201.006, Government Code) fails to reflect that many cities, including Borger, utilize diverse revenue streams. Tying borrowing capacity to a single revenue source risks paralyzing important capital planning efforts—especially in smaller cities where flexibility is key to reacting to infrastructure needs.

Further, restricting certificates of obligation (COs) removes a vital tool cities use to respond to urgent needs, natural disasters, or regulatory compliance. The City of Borger uses COs responsibly to support 5-year CIP planning for projects identified through comprehensive and strategic planning that involved significant community engagement. COs are subject to public notice, public hearings, and adopted within a transparent budget process, allowing Cities to save time and money on infrastructure projects and other needs when the cost and time of a GO might not be practical.

This bill appears to address concerns specific to larger cities but applies a sweeping policy to all municipalities regardless of size, capacity, or fiscal discipline. Borger should not be penalized for the actions of other jurisdictions. A one-size-fits-all approach erodes local autonomy and undermines the efforts of well-managed cities that have demonstrated financial prudence and accountability.

We respectfully urge the Committee to reconsider provisions that hinder financial flexibility, limit local solutions, and treat all cities uniformly despite vastly different conditions throughout our diverse State. Please preserve our ability to plan responsibly, serve our residents effectively, and remain stewards of local tax dollars.

Chris Sanchez
City of Mesquite
Mesquite, TX

I wanted to express the City of Mesquite's opposition to House Bill 19 (HB 19), which we believe will have negative consequences for the City of Mesquite and the ability to effectively finance infrastructure projects and meet the needs of residents. Many of the proposed changes create undue burdens and reduce flexibility in managing local finances.

Below, I've outlined the most concerning provisions of HB 19 and their likely impact on the City of Mesquite:

- Limitations on Debt Issuance and Defeasances
 - o The bill's restriction on the ability of local governments to engage in defeasances (early bond repayments) could severely limit our financial flexibility. Defeasances allow us to save on interest costs by paying off existing debt early. Limiting this practice, especially in cases where the bonds are not currently scheduled for repayment, reduces our ability to manage debt effectively and might lead to higher long-term costs for taxpayers.
- Debt Service Limitations
 - o The new cap on annual debt service, limiting it to 20% of average property tax collections over the last three years, could have disastrous effects for cities like ours that rely on bonds to fund infrastructure. This cap will make it more difficult for us to issue new bonds, preventing us from addressing critical infrastructure needs such as public safety, road maintenance, and water systems.
- Restricting Use of Bond Proceeds and Certificates of Obligation (COs)
 - o The bill restricts the use of Certificates of Obligation (COs) for a wider range of public works projects and imposes severe restrictions on their issuance. COs are an important tool for financing infrastructure, particularly when urgent repairs or improvements are necessary. Limiting their use to only certain projects and reducing the maximum term from 40 to 30 years will drive up costs and make it harder for local governments to meet the needs of their communities.
- Freeze on Tax Notes After Failed Elections
 - o HB 19 imposes a five-year freeze on issuing tax anticipation notes following a failed bond election unless emergency conditions apply. For cities that rely on these notes to bridge gaps in financing for essential services, this provision could create severe cash flow problems and delay important projects.
- Changes to Voter Petition Requirements
 - o The lowering of the voter petition threshold from 5% to 2% of registered voters is a problematic change. While we value public input in our financial decisions, this provision would allow a small group of citizens to push for costly bond elections that may not reflect the will of the broader community. This could increase costs and divert resources from other critical areas each time we hold an election.

The City of Mesquite is concerned about the unintended consequences of these provisions, which will damage our ability to manage debt and invest in our community's future.

Tiffany Anderson
City of Coppell
Coppell, TX

Chairman Meyer and Members of the Committee,

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HB 19 would prohibit cities like ours from using Certificates of Obligation to renovate aging park facilities or build new ones unless we place those projects on a crowded November ballot. Not every recreation facility project rises to the level of a general obligation bond campaign—but that doesn't mean it isn't important. Delaying improvements to our park system limits access and increases long-term maintenance costs.

We plan responsibly, we host public input sessions, and we respond to what residents ask for. HB 19 takes away our ability to act on that feedback in a timely and effective way. I urge you to vote against this bill and preserve local flexibility to invest in quality-of-life infrastructure.

Respectfully,
Tiffany Anderson

Presleigh Easton
City of Coppell
Coppell, TX

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HB 19 would prohibit cities like ours from using Certificates of Obligation to renovate aging park facilities or build new ones unless we place those projects on a crowded November ballot. Not every recreation facility project rises to the level of a general obligation bond campaign—but that doesn’t mean it isn’t important. Delaying improvements to our park system limits access and increases long-term maintenance costs.

We plan responsibly, we host public input sessions, and we respond to what residents ask for. HB 19 takes away our ability to act on that feedback in a timely and effective way. I urge you to vote against this bill and preserve local flexibility to invest in quality-of-life infrastructure.

Respectfully,
Presleigh Easton

Meagan Beaujean
The City of Coppell
Coppell, TX

Chairman Meyer and Members of the Committee,

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Respectfully,

Meagan Beaujean

Bruce Arfsten, Mayor
Town of Addison, TX
Dallas, TX

Dear Chair Meyer and Committee Members:

On behalf of the Town of Addison, I am writing to strongly oppose HB 19 to limit the ability of local governments to issue and repay debt for critical infrastructure projects.

There are many concerning sections of this bill; however, I will outline the most significant to Addison:

- The proposal to limit maximum annual debt service from property taxes to 20% of the average property tax collections of the prior three years would be the most harmful to Addison. Addison currently would be above the proposed 20% cap and would not be projected to fall below it for the next 8-10 years, effectively halting infrastructure improvement projects for the next decade, thereby risking our economic growth and vital services. Addison has prudently managed our debt issuances, and our existing debt is primarily due to critical improvements approved by voters in prior bond elections.

Further, this effectively removes the ability for elected officials or voters to decide and approve bonds for critical needs. As an example, the Town is in discussions to replace our aging, failing Police Station building. If this cap were in place, there would be no available debt options to finance a new building and our first responders would be stuck for years in an unacceptable environment, thereby making it difficult to retain or recruit staff and adequately protect and serve our community.

- As written, the bill eliminates the use of self-supporting property tax backed debt that is repaid by other revenue sources. For Addison, that would mean the Utility Fund, Stormwater Fund, and Airport Fund would issue revenue bonds for projects that would likely not carry the same AAA/Aaa ratings as Town issued Certificates of Obligation. Revenue bonds have higher interest rates, increased bond issuance costs, require reserve funds, and contain revenue requirements that CO's do not – ultimately driving up the costs for the services provided by these funds to the Town's customers. Addison is a AAA/Aaa rated organization, demonstrating its financial strength and ability to manage critical decisions for our own community. We should be able to continue to leverage that strong financial position to the benefit of our residents and customers.

For these reasons, among many others, the Town of Addison opposes HB 19, and we respectfully ask you to strongly consider our concerns and the potential harm to your constituents.

Trinity Klepzig
City of Coppell, self (aquatics supervisor)
Lewisville, TX

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comment. I oppose House Bill 19 because it overrides the voice of our residents and limits the financial tools they have already empowered us to use.

Coppell voters have consistently supported long-term investments in infrastructure. Our City Council, in turn, has used Certificates of Obligation judiciously, not to sidestep the public but to match project timelines with real community needs. The bond packages we issue are rooted in our publicly adopted Capital Improvement Plan and are subject to public hearings, comment periods, and transparency requirements.

This bill replaces local decision-making with rigid, state-imposed formulas. It ignores the will of voters who already entrusted their local officials with budget authority. By forcing all major funding decisions onto a single November ballot, HB 19 creates bottlenecks that slow progress and inject uncertainty into our planning cycles. It impacts our community in these ways:

- o Only November elections would be allowed—slowing timelines and increasing the chance of failure due to crowded ballots.
- o A failed bond vote would legally block us from addressing the same project for five years.
- o Delays in quality-of-life improvements and cost increases due to inflation.
- o Higher borrowing costs as cities and ISDs rush to issue bonds after November elections.
- o Increased risk of voter failure for operational but non-public projects.

Responsible cities like Coppell should not be penalized for their stewardship. HB 19 creates delay, confusion, and inefficiency in municipal governance—and we ask that you vote against it.

Respectfully,
Trinity

Jennifer Brown
City of Jersey Village, TX - Finance Director
Jersey Village, TX

The provisions of H.B. 19 needlessly constrain the issuance of GO Bonds in several ways- first, by limiting authorization by voters to the November election date, and second, by limiting annual debt service from property taxes to 20 percent of property tax collections. This second limitation effectively prevents local governments from constructing or maintaining infrastructure within their boundaries for which they are obligated to provide services to their residents as most local governments are already near or exceed the 20% threshold of their property tax revenues going to support annual debt service obligations. The 2024 debt service component of the tax rate is just \$0.145982 per \$100 valuation out of a total tax rate of \$0.78700.

The City of Jersey Village only has two GO bond issues outstanding- with tax supported annual debt service obligations at just \$2M per year. This level of debt accounts for 18.5% of the City's property tax revenues. The City has \$5.185M in authorized but unissued bonds for streets/roads and bridges and plans to issue this debt in FY26 to reconstruct roadways within the City that are 40-50 years old- at the end of their useful life. If this bill proceeds and is approved, the City would effectively be prohibited from issuing these bonds until FY 2028 when the debt service levy falls to 7.7% of the tax revenues.

The second provision that is problematic is the prohibition of the issuance of CO's for public improvements, except for those required to comply with a state or federal law- but only if the issuer has been notified that they are already non-compliant with the law. This prevents issuers from proactively addressing issues that come up that need to be addressed outside of the limitations of taking bonds to the voters- which, if H.B. 19 passes, would be only at the November uniform election date. Many cities hold their elections in May for City Council based on their home rule charter; often they will place GO Bond referendums on this ballot due to there already being local interest in the election. Restricting bond referendums to the November election buries them on an already busy ballot where voters are less able to educate themselves on the issues before them.

Cities are the most accountable level of government- residents regularly address issues with the City Council as they attend meetings in person and see their council members in the community. The state's proposal to restrict a city's ability to issue CO's by project type or take GO bonds to voters or even issuing voter-approved GO bonds because of an arbitrary 20% limitation based on tax revenues, prevents cities from addressing infrastructure needs that affect residents daily. Cities should be allowed to take on projects that benefit their community as authorized by their residents. Voters are already informed about the tax implications of proposed GO bonds; if voters approve the bonds, then the City should be allowed to issue them.

Robert Nichols
Self-Mayor City of Fairfield
Fairfield, TX

Topics addressed in HB 19 include the following:

- New stringent limitations on issuance of all ad valorem tax debt (voted or non-voted and all issuer types) through a new bond allowable test;
- November-only election dates;
- Significant narrowing of allowable infrastructure under HB 1869 (2021) and elimination of the designated infrastructure definition;
- Significant restrictions on tax notes and COs;
- 5-year freeze on tax notes and COs after a failed election;
- Reduction in petition threshold for a CO election;
- Defeasance restrictions;
- Removal of Hospital Districts as authorized issuers of COs and tax notes;
- Prohibitions on an M&O tax rate increase being used to repay debt; and
- Super-majority approval requirements for governing bodies approving tax rate increases.

My thoughts, if this this is enacted as written, it would have major impact on the City's ability to fund projects through COs and bond elections.

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My thoughts, if this this is enacted as written, it would have major impact on the City's ability to fund projects through COs and bond elections.

Joseph Weber
City of Coppell
Providence Village, TX

This bill would significantly restrict how we fund and deliver major infrastructure projects. This bill is targeted at reducing the use of debt for projects, a critical tool for us that allows future users that benefit from the infrastructure to pay the costs over time. We have many projects in Coppell that require large amounts of time and capital in order to complete. Though many of these projects can be budgeted for each year, others require the use of debt. This bill would affect the quality of our products and services offered in Coppell and potentially see us limit the amount of what we can do. Though this is an option it is not the standard we strive to reach here in Coppell for our residents. Debt for businesses can be a tool to start something new, expand, or make things better. It should be looked at the same way for municipalities so we have the opportunity to do the same for the benefit of our residents.

Kim Tiehen, CPA and CGFO
City of Coppell
Coppell, TX

Chairman Meyer and Committee Members,
Thank you for the opportunity to provide comment. I respectfully oppose House Bill 19 due to the unintended financial consequences it could impose on local taxpayers.
Under HB 19, if all cities are forced to rush bond authorizations to the November ballot, the municipal bond market could flood. This increases competition, drives up interest rates, and reduces investor attention for smaller cities like ours. That means higher borrowing costs and more tax dollars spent on interest instead of roads, buildings, or public services.
Additionally, construction inflation doesn't pause for voter approval. Delays caused by HB 19 would mean we pay more for the same projects months or years later. That's not conservative budgeting—it's inefficient and costly.
If the goal is to protect taxpayers, we urge you to consider the real-world impact of HB 19. Sometimes, delay costs more than action.
Respectfully,
Kim Tiehen, CPA, CGFO, MPA
Director of Strategic Financial Engagement
City of Coppell

Justin Parker
City of Spearman, City Manager
Spearman, TX

I am the City Manager for the City of Spearman. HB 19 will have a significant, widespread negative impact on cities of all sizes across the state, especially smaller cities, which make up the overwhelming majority of local governments statewide. This bill drastically constrains the tools available to cities to provide for citizens. In small cities where ad valorem tax revenue generally doesn't cover the cost of operating a police or volunteer fire department. Debt tools are invaluable to maintaining infrastructure and public safety in our small rural communities. Small rural communities are already incredibly limited in revenue. Taking away from our already limited toolbox will have an incredibly negative effect on our citizens as we will not be able to fund capital projects or purchase equipment to provide for their needs.

REGINA SALAZAR
city of coppell
COPPELL, TX

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Respectfully,
Regina Salazar

Cheryl Johnson, Galveston County Tax Assessor Collector
Galveston County Tax Office
Galveston County, TX

I support passage of this legislation, particularly if it only allows voter approved debt.

Sarah Beck
Self
Austin, TX

My name is Sarah and I am a born and raised Texan in Austin. I urge the Ways and Means Committee to please OPPOSE HB 19 and HB 3879.

These bills disrupt standard municipal financing used throughout Texas. The bills also interfere with a legally structured financial mechanism that was approved by voters. Changing the rules after voter approval is highly concerning and sends a message about Texas' respect for local investment decisions.

Austinites have voted to approve a transit plan and these bills will disrupt that. Please OPPOSE these bills.

Thank you.

Thomas Reeves
City of Baytown
Baytown, TX

The City of Baytown opposes this bill.

Perry Fowler, Executive Director
Texas Water Infrastructure Network
Austin, TX

Chairman Meyers and Members of the Committee,
My name is Perry Fowler, and I serve as Executive Director of the Texas Water Infrastructure Network (TXWIN), a trade association representing contractors and related businesses that build the water infrastructure our communities across Texas rely on every day.

Today, we registered “on” HB 19 to express significant concerns about the bill’s potential to limit the ability of political subdivisions to issue local debt—especially for critical water infrastructure projects. Water is a pressing issue in Texas. Across the state, we are witnessing the deterioration of aging water infrastructure. These systems must be repaired, upgraded, or replaced—this is not optional. While the Texas Water Fund may provide support for some communities, not all will be able to access those dollars. Local debt issuance remains a critical and necessary financing tool.

We have conveyed our concerns to staff and legislative leadership and are hopeful that any committee substitute preserves the flexibility necessary to ensure local governments can continue meeting their infrastructure obligations. We appreciate that the bill continues to allow the use of GO bonds for water infrastructure projects, but we respectfully highlight the following concerns:

1. ****Uniform Election Dates (Section 2):****

Requiring elections only on uniform dates could delay urgent projects—some of which may pose a public health risk if not addressed promptly. We respectfully request an exemption for water and other critical infrastructure projects.

2. ****Use of Debt “Only as Necessary” (Section 271.045(a)):****

This language is vague and could be misinterpreted. Most water infrastructure projects are necessary by nature—especially those tied to health, safety, and service reliability. This provision should be clarified to avoid unintended restrictions.

3. ****Change Order Limitations (Section 271.045(b)):****

The proposed limitations do not reflect current economic conditions. Infrastructure costs are rising steadily due to inflation and tariffs—many of which take effect after contract execution. Without the flexibility to adjust for unforeseen changes, local governments may feel forced to overestimate project costs upfront, increasing financial burden unnecessarily. The current 25% change order cap strikes a reasonable balance and should remain.

Local officials are elected to make sound, responsible decisions in the best interests of their communities. They need the tools and discretion to do so effectively.

We are committed to working with committee staff, House leadership, and other stakeholders to ensure HB 19 achieves its goals without impairing the delivery of essential infrastructure. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Respectfully, Perry Fowler

Geoffrey Chambless
self
Austin, TX

I strongly oppose this attempt to overwrite the will of my vote and other voters, and harming the ability to fund project I other Austinites desire.

David Ellison
Self
Coppell, TX

Chairman Meyer and Members of the Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to submit this comment. I am writing in opposition to House Bill 19 because of the lasting harm it will cause to our ability to maintain and expand community facilities that directly serve residents.

Parks and recreation infrastructure—including community centers, trails, and athletic facilities—are more than amenities. They’re critical to public health, community cohesion, and even property values. As a Coppell resident, we have long prioritized high-quality park services, and our investment has paid off in community engagement and wellness.

HB 19 would prohibit cities like ours from using Certificates of Obligation to renovate aging park facilities or build new ones unless we place those projects on a crowded November ballot. Not every recreation facility project rises to the level of a general obligation bond campaign—but that doesn’t mean it isn’t important. Delaying improvements to our park system limits access and increases long-term maintenance costs.

We plan responsibly, we host public input sessions, and we respond to what residents ask for. HB 19 takes away our ability to act on that feedback in a timely and effective way. I urge you to vote against this bill and preserve local flexibility to invest in quality-of-life infrastructure.

If this bill is approved it will hamstring the City of Coppell’s ability to address infrastructure needs in a timely fashion that the citizens have identified. Coppell has consistently ranked in the top places to raise a family and is well known for its park infrastructure. I consistently hear positive feedback from citizens while out in our parks or walking the trails about the beautiful and well maintained parks system. That is a big reason why people choose to live here and why surrounding cities citizens come here to visit. They want a safe, well maintained place to visit and potentially raise their families.

Respectfully,

Gary Tittle, Chief of Police & Legislative Liaison
City of Richardson
Richardson, TX

The City of Richardson opposes HB 19, which imposes several limitations on city issuance of debt, including certificates of obligation and anticipation notes. This bill would move all general obligation bond elections and property tax rate elections to the November uniform election date, prohibit a city from issuing debt if the annual debt service in a fiscal year on debt payable from property taxes exceeds 20 percent of the amount of property tax collections averaged over the preceding three years, and most concerning is that the bill would limit certificates of obligation to only be used for public works that are necessary to comply with state or federal regulations to address a public health emergency or natural disaster, or to comply with a court order. Cities commonly issue certificates of obligation in lieu of revenue bonds to finance needed utility construction and upgrades. The reason is because certificates typically cost much less to issue than revenue bonds and these certificates are generally repaid with revenues from city utility systems (self supporting) instead of property taxes. When used for utility systems, the city’s property tax base can serve as “credit support” which significantly reduces borrowing costs and interest rates. The Texas Legislature has enacted several substantive and process reforms relating to the issuance of certificates in prior sessions, such as HB 1869 and HB 4082, to eliminate some of the rare but controversial uses of certificates. We ask this committee to let the recent reforms continue to work, while rejecting attempts to effectively eliminate the use of certificates of obligations.

Marilyn Broyles
Legislative Assistant for Mayor Gary Hulse of the City of Haslet
Haslet, TX

Chairman and Members of the Committee

The City of Haslet opposes HB 19, Sec. 1431.002 (d), the governing body of an issuer may not authorize an anticipation note to pay a contractual obligation to be incurred if a bond proposition to authorize the issuance of bonds for the same purpose was submitted to the voters during the preceding five years and failed to be approved. We oppose this amendment on the premise that these bonds are the only means a political subdivision has to acquire funds for absolute necessity regarding health, safety, and welfare for the public when there is an immediate issue driven by uncontrolled growth. Limiting resubmission of a bond election to every 5 years will delay funding infrastructure projects and necessary improvements. The City of Haslet respectfully requests you oppose HB 19.

Thank you,
Marilyn Broyles
Legislative Assistant for Mayor Gary Hulse of the City of Haslet

Ethan Kerr
City of Coppell
Grapevine, TX

Chairman Meyer and Members of the Committee,

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Respectfully,
Ethan Kerr

Adam Richter
City of Coppell
Dallas, TX

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Respectfully,
Adam Richter

Vanessa Tarver
City of Coppell
Irving, TX

Chairman Meyer and Committee Members,

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comment. I respectfully submit this comment in strong opposition to HB 19.

Public Works oversees the city's streets, drainage systems, and facilities—many of which require ongoing investment to stay functional and safe. Coppell initiated this year plans to reconstruct Royal Lane, a major roadway that has reached its end of life, and residents are aware and insist upon a reconstruction of said road. This \$24 million project was financed through Certificates of Obligation, allowing us to move quickly and maintain the safety and flow of traffic through a key corridor.

Under HB 19, we would be forced to place this kind of project on a November ballot, delaying it by months and introducing political uncertainty into what is a technical, infrastructure-based need. If voters declined it, we would be prohibited from addressing that same need for five years. Imagine being told you cannot fix a failing road for half a decade—not because the city lacks the will or funds, but because of a procedural barrier in state law. Our citizens, and myself, find this unacceptable. This is not how we operate when providing services to our residents, and not how we would like to operate going forward.

HB 19 removes the agility we need to protect public safety, mobility, and quality of life.

Please reject this bill and keep critical infrastructure decisions in the hands of local leaders who are closest to the work—and to the residents we serve.

Respectfully,
Vanessa Tarver

Karen Felker, Mayor
City of Borger municipality
Borger, TX

Please realize how this ties the hands of small rural cities to not be able to control the certificate of obligations for our community. Especially now when we have to adjust our purchasing power to take into account long lead times and delivery schedules of equipment and even contractors delivery schedules of supplies. We can not be tied to an election one time a year and take care of our city properly. Please be mindful of the fact that city size, location, and so much more goes into account for our financial abilities to care for our community. Every city is different and local government is elected to understand and work things out for that particular community. Please do not tie our hands.

With respect,
Karen Felker
Mayor City of Borger

Vera Bennett
City of Tool
Tool, TX

As an individual council member, I support this bill and urge the committee to pass it. The City of Tool is a small city with a particular council member who wants to leverage debt and more debt. We are already at greater than 20% as I see it and it needs to stop. Thank you for your time.

Courtney Sladek
City of El Campo
El Campo, TX

On behalf of the City of El Campo, I respectfully register in opposition to H.B. 19 (Meyer).

This bill would significantly restrict our city's ability to responsibly manage local infrastructure needs by limiting the use of certificates of obligation and placing arbitrary caps on debt issuance based on property tax collections. These changes do not reflect the financial realities or emergency needs that cities like El Campo face in maintaining essential services and public infrastructure.

Additionally, moving all general obligation bond elections exclusively to the November uniform election date creates significant fiscal planning challenges. Most municipal fiscal years, including El Campo's, end in September, similar to the State of Texas whose fiscal year ends in August. November bond elections would occur after the start of our new fiscal year, making it extremely difficult to properly prepare debt service rates and incorporate newly approved bonds into our annual budgeting process. This timing misalignment disrupts the careful financial planning needed to responsibly manage municipal debt and could lead to budgetary complications that ultimately impact taxpayers.

We respectfully urge lawmakers to preserve local decision-making authority and fiscal flexibility by opposing H.B. 19.

Samuel Sheetz, Legislative Director
Americans for Prosperity
Austin, TX

Americans for Prosperity thanks Chairman Meyer for bringing this bill forward to protect taxpayers. The Texas legislature has been delivering property tax relief to Texas taxpayers to the tune of Billions of dollars. \$18 Billion in 2023 and there is more planned for this 2025 session. But this property tax relief is being diluted by spending and debt at the local level across Texas. We support House Bill 19 because it makes local governments more responsive to the will of the voters when it comes to spending and debt obligations that they have to pay for in the form of property taxes.

1. Uniform election date in November to increase vote participation and turnout. Often times, big financial decisions are placed on the May ballot where voter participation is very low. Moving to the uniform election date ensures that more taxpayers get to participate and make financial decisions for their communities.
2. If a bond for a certain purpose fails to pass, it cannot be brought up again for 5 years. If the voters say NO, then their decision should be respected.
3. Redefines “public work” to exclude things like stadiums, hotels, animal shelters
4. Lowers the petition protest threshold from 5% to 2% of registered voters, making it easier for taxpayers to challenge. In order to prevent spending from going up and taxes along with it, tens of thousands of signatures have to be gathered in a short amount of time. Setting the bar so high is completely impractical and simply unfair to taxpayers that it hardly ever happens.
 - o Bexar County – 1.2 Million registered voter – 60K signatures needed
 - o Dallas County – 1.4 Million registered voter – 70K signatures needed
 - o Tarrant County – 1.2 Million registered voter – 60K signatures needed
 - o Bell County – 227,000 registered voters – 11,350 signatures needed
 - o Hidalgo County – 417,000 registered voters – 20,850 needed

Vincent McKibben
Self Computer Engineer
Austin, TX

This bill restricts the control that local governments have over how they use there budgets. In order to capitalize on Texas growing population, it is necessary that the largest growing local governments have the autonomy to fund projects and infrastructure that will allow for their economies to flourish. The public should be able to determine what their tax money is used for and the closer you are to the local community the better that money can be adequately spent.

forrest mcdonald
self
Austin, TX

I am Forrest McDonald, a constituent in Austin, and I strongly opposed HB19 because I believe it will harm the future of Texas Cities.

This bill undermines local control and voter approved projects, limits cities' abilities to plan for themselves, and negatively impacts Texas's economic future
