



VERONICA ESCOBAR
El Paso County Judge

March 9, 2011

Dear Texas Legislator:

On the reverse side of this letter is information regarding the costs El Paso County incurs for unfunded state mandates (also included are costs for core departments that are essential to performing mandated functions). In addition to burdensome unfunded mandates, counties are required to collect fees on behalf of the State of Texas. For additional perspective, you will find that amount as well as how much of that revenue we are allowed to keep.

Unfunded mandates (and the core departments essential to performing those functions) cost us \$179 million in FY2011. Additionally, while we collected \$100 million for the State of Texas in 2010, El Paso County was allowed to keep only 0.22% of that (which amounted to \$228,982).

Last month I delivered a one-page estimate to state legislators outlining the impact to El Paso County of budget cuts identified in H.B. 1 (a \$70 million impact in the biennium). It is my hope that the supplemental information (reverse) will help you understand that counties like mine cannot absorb the budget cuts identified in H.B. 1. Between the costs incurred to collect revenues for the state and raising local revenue to pay for unfunded mandates, our local property taxpayers are already shouldering too significant of a burden.

There is more detailed information available which I am happy to provide you with upon request. I appreciate your advocacy for our counties, and I urge you not to adopt a "cuts only" strategy which is sure to devastate communities like mine. From dipping into the rainy day fund to increasing revenues - there are alternatives available that should be considered so that the burden of tax increases aren't shifted to local governments, especially in property poor areas along the Border like El Paso.

Sincerely,

Veronica Escobar
El Paso County Judge

EL PASO COUNTY MANDATED UNFUNDED SERVICES FY 2011

CORE SERVICES	
SERVICE	COST
JAILS (DETENTION & ANNEX)	\$61,812,007
COURTS (COUNTY/DISTRICT/PROBATE/JUVENILE)	\$19,446,876
JUVENILE PROBATION	\$10,589,689
ADULT PROBATION FACILITIES	\$657,863
PROSECUTION	\$23,300,716
MENTAL HEALTH	\$745,000
ELECTIONS	\$1,175,074
COUNTY AUDITOR/TREASURER	\$3,323,658
DEBT SERVICE (GADMINGF 6954 & 6959)	\$25,000
EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT	\$56,631
LAW ENFORCEMENT (CONSTABLES)	\$1,592,853
EMPLOYEE BENEFITS - UNEMPLOYMENT	\$2,000
BURIALS	\$101,365
CHILD WELFARE LEGAL FEES ACCOUNT	\$666,398
COUNTY JUDGE/COMMISSIONERS	\$1,097,466
COUNTY CLERK	\$1,976,678
COUNTY CLERK CRIMINAL FEE COLLECTIONS DEPT	\$646,624
DISTRICT CLERK	\$3,940,224
JUSTICES OF THE PEACE	\$2,689,625
ON-SITE SEWAGE INSPECTORS	\$165,199
TAX OFFICE	\$2,975,913

SHERIFF/PUBLIC SAFETY	
SHERIFF LAW ENFORCEMENT	\$23,616,623
SHERIFF TRAINING ACADEMY	\$609,644
ANIMAL CONTROL	\$213,345

SUPPORT SERVICES	
*FACILITIES (UTILITIES)	\$1,129,180
*GENERAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE ACCOUNT	\$6,150,276
*MEDICAL EXAMINER	\$1,571,487
*MISSION VALLEY ANNEX	\$30,603
*NORTHEAST ANNEX	\$52,231
*YSLETA ANNEX	\$115,207
*HUMAN RESOURCES	\$1,215,015
*INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY	\$5,697,697
*PURCHASING	\$1,219,323
*COMMUNICATIONS DEPARTMENT	\$393,164

*Facilities and support services are not considered "mandates" by the State; however, infrastructure, utilities, technology, etc. are essential in order to perform mandated functions.

TOTAL FOR ALL UNFUNDED MANDATORY CORE & SUPPORT SERVICES	\$179,000,654
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FUNDS RETAINED & REMITTED BY EL PASO COUNTY TO THE STATE OF TEXAS

BIENNIUM COLLECTIONS BY COUNTY FOR THE STATE OF TEXAS				
	FY 2010	FY 10 County Retained	FY 2009	FY 09 County Retained
STATE TAXES & FEES	\$93,760,483		\$88,970,508	
STATE COURT COSTS	\$5,872,863	\$228,982	\$5,872,366	\$242,684
OTHER STATE FEES	\$658,867		\$650,967	
TOTAL	\$100,292,213	\$228,982	\$95,493,841	\$242,684