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The Honorable Greg Abbott
Governor of Texas
Austin, Texas

Re: A Legislative Solution to Rescue Austin and APD from the Austin City Council

Dear Governor Abbott:

We wanted to share with you procedural details of a legislative solution to address both the public safety issues facing the capital city, and legitimate concerns of all Texans caused by the recent actions of the Austin Mayor and council to defund the Austin Police Department.

Compelling statewide policy issues have been created by their defunding actions, which have already led to the necessity for you, as Governor, to deploy Texas Department of Public Safety resources for general law enforcement duties within the city. The Texas Constitution and rules of the House and Senate allow for a bill addressing a problem in a specific locality, if it is of a subject matter of statewide import and if its classification scheme relates to the bill's purpose. That is precisely the circumstances Austin's politicians have handed state leaders.

We have been working with other former parliamentarians privately and are convinced that a proper approach is available to permanently and effectively fix the array of continual public safety problems created by Austin's local government. This approach also clears the procedural hurdle for a general law bill. Legislation should be enacted as follows:

A municipality with a population of one million or more, with its primary police department having a ratio of fewer than 2.0 sworn police officers per 1000 residents, where the Governor has determined, due to insufficient municipal resources being appropriated for public safety needs, the safety of the public is jeopardized such that the Texas Department of Public Safety must supplement general law enforcement duties within said municipality,

The legislature may by Act:

- (1) Consolidate said municipal police department with the Texas Department of Public Safety as a special municipal police department division answering to the director within the Texas Department of Public Safety and appropriate a sufficient portion of the municipality's tax revenue specifically for the ongoing operation of said division;
- (2) Direct the Public Safety Commission of the Texas Department of Public Safety in its agency's budget to recommend the specific budget for said division; and
- (3) Direct the Comptroller of Public Accounts to transfer each year into a special fund of the state treasury for appropriation by the legislature sufficient city sales taxes, property taxes and other taxes from the municipality's general fund for the purpose of funding said division.

We hope you will consider urging the legislature to enact this measure, which would enable legislation directed specifically at Austin, or could be used as a bracket for such a bill. The terms would not only address the immediate public safety crisis being suffered by Austinites as well as the men and women of the Austin Police Department, but would also give pause to any other city tempted to mimic Austin's actions.

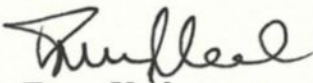
It is not realistic to expect that Austin's council during our lifetime will significantly change its anti-police political leanings. The explosion of homelessness, quality-of-life crimes and spikes in robberies and homicides will continue and worsen for citizens of Austin and all Texans here in the capital city as long as Austin's local politicians remain in charge of the police department.

A consolidation with DPS of municipal police functions, in Austin in particular, makes sense. It would also be a valuable recruiting tool for future applicants to the Austin Police Department.

The City of Austin's malfeasance is an open invitation to state leaders and the legislature to act. The state should accept the invitation.

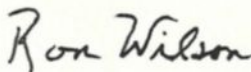
Please call on us if we can be of any assistance to you.

Your friends,



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