

MEDINA VALLEY INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT

"Proud of our past, dedicated to the present, committed to the Future"

PRESS RELEASE: MVIDS Leadership Testifies Before State Legislature

Castroville, Texas, May 9, 2019 -- Medina Valley ISD School Board President, Bruce Haby and Superintendent of Schools, Dr. Kenneth Rohrbach testified before the House Natural Resources Committee in Austin on April 16, 2019.

Haby and Rohrbach testified in support of House Bill 4031 which was sponsored by District 53 Representative Andrew Murr and were the only two individuals to testify in support of the bill's passage out of committee. The bill dealt with fees known as "impact fees" certain school districts incur from water supply or sewer service corporations.

Four individuals testified against the bill, Bruce Alexander (East Medina County Special Utility District, Texas Rural Water Association), Sherilyn Dahlberg (Sharyland WSC), Cody Faulk (Yancey Water Supply Corp.), Macmanus, Brian (East Rio Hondo Water Supply Corporation).

In his testimony, Dr. Rohrbach explained the burden these fees place on Medina Valley ISD. Specifically, Dr. Rohrbach pointed out that MVIDS's district covers five different water systems and the cost of school construction can vary significantly depending on which system the school is located.

"We don't have a great deal of leeway where we locate our new campuses," Dr. Rohrbach said. "We have to build campuses where the kids are, and where the development is." Dr. Rohrbach pointed out that State law currently prevents municipal water suppliers like the San Antonio Water System from imposing the fee meaning school districts like Northside ISD never pay impact fees.

In his testimony, Haby disputed assertions made by opponents of the bill who suggested eliminating their ability to impose impact fees would hurt their bottom line.

"We're not saying that there aren't expenses that occur, we understand that," Haby said. "What we're saying is, level the playing field with the school districts. And let's also put this in perspective; We're not out here building elementary schools just to build an elementary school."

Haby suggested that the burden of impact fees should be placed on the developer and not the school, noting that the developers are making the decision to build in the MVIDS, the district is only growing to meet the demands of those homes.

As of May 7, 2019, the official status of HB 4031 is "Left Pending in Committee." The bill has not been scheduled for any further action. The 86th Legislative Session ends Monday, May 22.

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