

TEXAS HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

#85

Late Backup



EDDIE RODRIGUEZ

FIFTY-FIRST DISTRICT

November 18, 2013

The Honorable Lee Leffingwell, Mayor, City of Austin and
The Honorable Members of the City of Austin City Council

Re: Zoning Case C-14-2013-0060 – Bluff Springs Food Mart

Dear Mayor Leffingwell and Council Members,

I represent the Dove Springs neighborhood and Langford Elementary School. I join many of my constituents in the belief that the zoning changes proposed in zoning case C-14-2013-0060 related to the proposed Bluff Springs Food Mart would have a negative impact on the students of Langford Elementary School and the residents of the Dove Springs community. Without careful consideration, the impact of this proposed zoning case could be detrimental to the welfare of these students and residents in the area.

The proposed Bluff Springs Food Mart would be located near Langford Elementary School and Kendra Page Park. Residents of Dove Springs are concerned about businesses moving into the community that sell alcohol and unhealthy foods near Langford Elementary School where many students walk or bike to school. State law prohibits the sale of alcohol within 300 feet of schools for a valid reason - to protect the welfare of students. More and more, we are learning about the health consequences of fast and processed food on our children. The Dove Springs community has the highest childhood obesity rate in the City. This can lead to many diseases such as juvenile diabetes. We need to do all we can to protect the health and well-being of the children of Dove Springs. While the property referenced in this zoning case is outside the boundaries of the 300 feet, the school is in close proximity to the property.

It is the choice of the City of Austin to exercise discretionary zoning authority as "a power granted to municipalities by the State in order to promote public health, safety, morals, or general welfare, and to protect and preserve places and areas of historical, cultural, or architectural importance and significance." I understand the City must comply with existing state law, and I ask that you carefully review the proximity of Langford Elementary School and Kendra Page Park to the proposed Bluff Springs Food Mart. I urge you to carefully consider the merits of this case, and the impact on the Dove Springs community with an eye on the spirit of the law: the promotion of the health and safety of school children.

Sincerely,

Representative Eddie Rodriguez
House District 51

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