

## **Vote to Keep your Ambulances and Advanced EMS Services May 1**

*by Josh Stubblefield, President, IAFF Local #4137*

In 2012, Travis County Emergency Services District 2 Pflugerville Fire Department began sounding the alarm about the funding structure for the district, warning that continuing to pay for EMS services out of a fire department budget was not viable long term. The situation was made even more urgent after a state law was passed in 2019 that capped ESDs in their tax assessment ability.

"Projections show that ESD 2 will not have enough resources to continue providing enhanced emergency services, including advanced life support and ambulance transport at its current levels," the ESD 2 Board of Commissioners said in September.

Even with assessments on current growth, without additional revenue sources, ESD 2 will not be able to continue both fire and EMS ambulance services at the current levels and standards expected in the community.

On May 1, an election will be held asking voters to approve the creation of a new emergency services district, Travis County Emergency Services District 17.

Creation of ESD 17 will provide dedicated EMS funding, ensuring residents will not only continue to receive services at the levels they have become accustomed to, but the staff and maintenance of these facilities will be guaranteed for the future. If voters elect not to approve the creation of ESD 17, ESD 2 will be forced to make tough decisions about cutting EMS, ambulance transport, and advanced life-support (ALS) availability, and face increased response times to emergencies in the community.

The new ESD is something Travis County Commissioner Jeff Travillion has been advocating for, "What is appropriate service? If I've had a heart attack, do I want the service to get to me in five to six minutes or 10 to 12 minutes? As our population ages, it is critically important that we're able to get to people within the community within a reasonable amount of time."

"This is something where we are growing in such a way that we really have to pay attention to all of the changes that are made on a yearly basis," Travillion said.

So the question most people want to know is, what will this do to my taxes? Current projections show that by funding ambulance transport and ALS services through ESD 17 the average homeowner would pay about \$16 per month.

"As firefighters, we've served the Wells Branch and Northtown communities for over 30 years and through this EMS overlay, we look forward to serving them for many more years to come," said Joshua Stubblefield, president of the Pflugerville Professional Firefighters Association.

We've been running our EMS, advanced life support, and ambulance services on fire department money and it's not sustainable. A vote for Travis County ESD 17 Proposition A will ensure the community continues to have the high caliber, highly efficient fire and EMS services we deserve.

Early voting is April 19-27 and Election Day is Saturday, May 1. For more information visit [VoteForESD17.com](http://VoteForESD17.com).