

Judge Weldon P. Cude
Pleasanton Express Weekly Judge's Column, May 24th

Greetings, amigos! Last Thursday, Atascosa County, in collaboration with nine other South Texas Counties, came together to show support and promote our shared goal of our resident's safety and security during the ongoing border crisis. County Judges traveled near and far to participate in this discussion; Karnes, La Salle, Dimmit, Kinney, McMullen, Live Oak, and the Zavala County Judges were in attendance, along with several County Sheriffs and various law enforcement agencies. The initial Coalition of Judges that came together to support this initiative also included Wilson, Frio, and Medina County Judges, although they could not attend. This Coalition of Counties intends to call for more robust security measures from our State and Federal Law Makers at the Texas Southern Border. During the meeting, we had multiple informative presentations from McMullen County Sheriff Emmett Shelton, Judge John Paul Schuster from Kinney County, Brent Smith - Kinney County Attorney, Nelson Barnes from the Texas Border Prosecution Unit, and Lieutenant Christopher Olivarez from Texas Highway Patrol who shared impactful statistics from the Operation Lone Star (OLS) initiative on behalf of Texas Highway Patrol, DPS.

Additionally, we shared information regarding the recent changes in U.S. Immigration Policy, including Title 42, Title 8, and the Circumvention of Lawful Pathways. After the presentation portion of the event, we opened a Q&A, where multiple residents had an opportunity to have their questions and concerns addressed by various agencies. I want to thank the residents from Atascosa and the surrounding counties that attended and participated in these critical discussions. Special thanks to Representatives from U.S. Senator Cornyn, State Senator Pete Flores, and State Representative Tracy O. King's Offices for attending this meeting. Having the attendance of our State delegation's staff was critical so that our State and Federal leaders are aware of the stories happening at the local level. If you didn't attend the meeting on Thursday, you can access the live-stream video on Atascosa County's YouTube page. Moving forward, I want the public to understand that the County Judges of this Coalition will travel between the districts of the ten participating County-region to conduct similar public meetings and presentations to educate the public on initiatives to combat the impacts of the border crisis and inform landowners of their rights. Our goal is to grow the Coalition and incorporate more participating Counties to pass Resolutions through their respective Commissioner's Courts that call for more action from our State and Federal Lawmakers.

Furthermore, all participating Counties will eventually come together to deliver each of our Resolutions to the Office of Governor Greg Abbott. As your County Judge, I am here to be the best advocate for all Atascosa County residents. Your concerns are my concerns. I am always available to listen and help address issues that impact our residents to the best of my ability. I hear many stories from the Sheriff's Office and various landowners affected by problems resulting from weak border security initiatives. Now is the time to act to keep Atascosa residents and all Texans safe. Please join this conversation and follow our progress as we continue this effort for a stronger, safer Texas. Together we are Atascosa Proud!