



Madeline Parker <mjparker@burnetcountytexas.org>

Proposed ESD #10 concerns

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Mon, Jul 21, 2025 at 12:32 PM

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Steve Schlumpberger; Briggs community resident since 1999

It goes without saying that NE Burnet County is underserved with ambulance service. Response times far exceed what any reasonable persons would expect if/when they need one. I do fully support some kind of improvement in response times for our District.

However, I do not support the creation of another taxing entity to fund it. As recently as this morning, I have been unable to find any actual written proposal relative to their intentions related to the subject matter. The ESD #8 website and their social media page have been devoid of information ever since it was first mentioned in their January 2025 board meeting. Meeting Minutes since that time have offered little comment. The ESD president did attend both the Oakalla Community Center and Briggs Community Center meeting since the first of the year. To his credit, he did mention that a full time ambulance service was one of their goals for the future. No mention of time frame or proposed funding. I suspect the voter's petition they circulated recently didn't mention it either.

Whenever they were circulating the voter's petition, I did go and meet with the Fire Chief & Fire Marshall and had a detailed conversation about their specific intentions. They indicated that they want to set up a service similar to what exists in the Bertram area. It is my understanding that the ambulance stationed in Bertram is actually a City of Burnet FD vehicle. The FD officials advised me that they are proposing to set up a similar situation in the Briggs area. Reviewing tax rate information on the CAD, I do not find that the Bertram area has a separate Ambulance only ESD. It was further disturbing to compare the fact that ESD #4 (Bertram FD) taxes at the rate of \$0.01/\$100 valuation whereas ESD #8 (Briggs Oakalla FD) uses the highest rate allowed by Texas State Law; \$0.10/\$100 V. It is my understanding that the proposed ESD #10 is recommending an **ADDITIONAL** \$0.10/\$100 V. More than double any other ESD in an unincorporated area of Burnet County. And 20 times more than citizens in the Bertram area pay. For what I've been told would be the exact same ambulance service. I can't help but ask the question "Why the huge rate difference in the two areas?" Why would they request a second ESD at the MAXIMUM rate allowed by Texas State law. I suppose some loophole makes it legal but it feels like double taxation for Emergency Services.

I do understand how a separate ambulance service is beneficial to an area like Marble Falls ESD #1 (taxing rate \$0.0141/\$100 V). I often refer to it as the Big City area of Burnet County. Obviously they have a much larger tax base and can spread out the costs better. I do not think it is fair to NE Burnet County residents to be charged 10 times or 20 times (in Bertram's case) as much just because we are a less populated area. I'm sure ESD #1 gets dozens of calls per DAY and needs full time service from multiple stations. If you review the ESD #8 monthly incident reports over the last several years, it becomes obvious that they respond to an average of about 25 to 30 calls per MONTH. They have told me in the past that somewhere between 60 & 70% of those calls involve ambulances. So maybe in the 15 to 20 range. That cost/benefit ratio is a bitter pill to swallow. At their proposed rate, they will take in between 400 & 500K tax dollars. For a "borrowed" ambulance service.

I acknowledge that growth will eventually come to NE Burnet County. As I started out saying, ambulance response time needs to improve in our area. I would hope that during the hearing tomorrow you ask them for other options. I'm sure the ONLY option is NOT maximum taxation.

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