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## **Open Letter to Texas Independent School Districts: Leave the Texas Association of School Boards**

November 22, 2021

Dear Texas Parents, Teachers, and School Board Members:

When we wrote to the Texas Association of School Boards (TASB) last month, it was out of the deep concern we had when the National Association of School Boards (NSBA) wrote a letter, dated September 29<sup>th</sup>, to the Biden Administration requesting the U.S. Department of Justice use counter-terrorism resources, including the Patriot Act, to target concerned parents who speak up at local school board meetings across the nation—a request that the FBI ominously accepted. At that time, only five states (Louisiana, Missouri, Ohio, Pennsylvania, and Tennessee) had taken action to sever ties with NSBA, and our letter to TASB encouraged TASB to follow suit. Since then, that list has grown, with ten other states (Alabama, Florida, Illinois, Kentucky, Montana, New Hampshire, North Carolina, South Carolina, Virginia, and Wisconsin) all taking action to either completely withdraw participation from NSBA or, at the very least, withdraw participation or dues from the organization.

In contrast, TASB has said nothing publicly of the situation. All that can be found is a statement they gave to the organization Parents Defending Education, where they passed the buck on to NSBA, saying they were neither “consulted nor involved” in the construction of the letter, and saying nothing with regard to the attack on parents by the NSBA. In TASB’s response to our letter, not only do they refuse to resign from NSBA, but they further minimize the situation by saying that NSBA “missed the mark” with their letter and that it was an unfortunate “distraction” from TASB’s work.

However, new documents have come to light showing that TASB did, in fact, know that NSBA was colluding with the White House to target and silence parents prior to the September 29<sup>th</sup> letter being sent. Yesterday, Congressman Chip Roy and others wrote a letter to TASB referencing a document obtained through a Freedom of Information Act request showing evidence that NSBA notified TASB (and all other affiliated state organizations) on September 17<sup>th</sup> that a letter accusing parents of domestic terrorism and requesting anti-terrorism resources be used was going to be sent to President Biden. We echo Congressman Roy’s questions as to when TASB knew about the September 29<sup>th</sup> letter, and whether they communicated their supposed disagreement to NSBA. Many other Texans are doing the same.

While NSBA has since admitted its wrongdoing in sending the letter, we want to be perfectly clear with our sentiments: The actions by the NSBA were much more than a “distraction,” as described by TASB, and they did much more than “miss the mark.” The September 29<sup>th</sup> letter was an outright attack on parents and an attempt to use the Patriot Act and other nearly unlimited powers of the federal government to silence them. And to date, the FBI directive remains in effect. Right now, concerned parents who voice opinions at school board meetings could now be “tagged” as a terrorist threat, and all at the request of NSBA.

Viola Garcia, who is the former president of TASB, also now leads NSBA as their president. Based on this and other evidence, it is difficult to believe that TASB was not involved, or, at the very least, aware of these unprecedented attacks on parents. Regardless, TASB has refused to sever ties with NSBA. Parental rights are under attack and sadly, those attacks are being funded by local school property taxpayers, as dues to TASB come from taxpayer resources.

Since the Texas Association of School Boards refuses to do the right thing to sever ties with the clearly un-American organization called the National School Boards Association, it’s time for our local ISDs to leave TASB. Parents are under attack, and it’s time for us to stand up and send a strong message supporting parental rights by no longer forcing taxpayers to pay for or belong to organizations that accuse sincerely concerned parents of domestic terrorism.

We encourage parents to go to their local school board meetings, make their voice heard, and demand their local ISDs leave the Texas Association of School Boards.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Mayes Middleton". The signature is written in a cursive, somewhat stylized font.

Mayes Middleton  
State Representative  
Chairman, Texas Freedom Caucus