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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Statement in response to Canutillo ISD Proposed Resolution - 15 February 2017

Public education is the cornerstone of democracy. And just like democracy, our public schools are a place where every child is *supposed* to be welcomed and afforded the best education possible - regardless of their income, needs, languages, or abilities. Our neighborhood schools have an obligation to reflect our American ideals - we are here for all children.

Many of you ran for office on that exact sentiment - for the kids.

We are tuition free, publicly funded institutions of learning which must provide an education to all children in our publicly governed school system.

Let us not forget that this body exists for the purpose of public education - not a private school, not a parochial institution or corporate charter school that selectively chooses the children the entity wishes to serve. You are here for all students, not just those with more money, those with more resources, or those with, as one board member put it in the paper, fewer *“social and related problems without the funding necessary to address those problems”*.

The problem is that Canutillo ISD, like districts across the state, is dealing with the problem of ensuring there is adequate funding to go around.

But the solution is not to unfairly try to turn away students because they are poor. The fact that you are even considering this resolution, along with statements like “serious financial and social effects” of the poor is an insult to this community. Moreover, it’s an insult to the history of this community.

As the member of the State Board of Education for District 1, I represent Canutillo, the rest of El Paso County, and 39 other counties in west and south Texas. I’m in agreement with you that the State of Texas is failing school districts when it comes to funding. That is indeed the heart of the issue.

And so I invite you to join me and others in our effort to get the legislature to fully fund public education.

On that note, I think that is best accomplished by this body signing a resolution asking the state to fully fund public education, rather than try to keep poor students out. Let us aim our rhetoric at the decision makers, not our children.

Because thoughts become actions.

This resolution is misguided and misplaced.

Solve the problem, don’t punish students for something they don’t have control of.

This resolution is non-binding, but it sends the wrong message to students and the community and is inconsistent with American values of equal opportunity. I’m not exactly sure who thought putting this item up for a vote was a good idea, but shame on them.

I urge the president to entertain a motion to delete this item.