

RESOLUTION
DECLARING STEPHENS COUNTY
100% OPEN FOR BUSINESS

WHEREAS, Stephens County, Texas, recognizes that the Constitution of the United States, as well as the Constitution of the State of Texas, enshrines certain rights of all Americans, including those fundamental liberty interests set forth in the Fourteenth Amendment of the US Constitution that prohibits any state from depriving any person of life, liberty, or property without due process of law; and,

WHEREAS, Stephens County recognizes that the US and Texas Declarations of Independence advance the “inalienable rights” of life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness in the face of governmental overreach; and,

WHEREAS, each of the Stephens County duly elected and appointed public servants took a sacred oath to preserve, protect and defend the US Constitution and the Constitution of the State of Texas; and,

WHEREAS, Stephens County welcomes, honors and respects the contributions of all businesses and employees of said businesses, regardless of their size and regardless of whether they have been deemed “essential” by some government decree or not; and,

WHEREAS, Stephens County’s diverse and entrepreneurial businesses positively contribute to the economic, cultural and social fabric of the County; and,

WHEREAS, all businesses in the County have not only been a catalyst for the County’s economic health, but have been the backbone of the County throughout its long history; and,

WHEREAS, Stephens County businesses are socially responsible and are capable and willing to maintain effective health protocols to ensure that Stephens County remains one of the strongest COVID-19 success stories in Texas; and,

WHEREAS, fostering a relationship of trust, respect and open communication between county officials and businesses is essential to the County’s mission of delivering effective public services in partnership with the community, thereby advancing a high quality of life for local residents; and,

WHEREAS, Stephens County seeks to foster trust, not fear, between County officials and businesses and citizens, while properly allocating limited local resources and encouraging cooperation and open communication, to ensure public safety and due process for all, irrespective of business status; and,

WHEREAS, Stephens County desires to demonstrate its commitment to its businesses and citizens by providing a safe community and by assuring them that, in accordance with federal and state laws and all state licensing authorities, the County will not of its own accord abridge such freedoms and rights; and,

WHEREAS, Stephens County recognizes and honors the inalienable rights of individuals, as individuals, to earn a living, to employ others or be employed, to provide income for their families, to give back to the community, to treat neighbors with respect and care, and contribute to the overall health and well-being of the community, without the need for undue government overreach, coercion and control; and,

WHEREAS, the County Attorney of Stephens County, due to the lack of specificity regarding enforcement in the Governor's orders, and in the pursuit of justice for Stephens County is unable to enforce the Governor's orders as of May 4th, 2020. However, if crimes are committed against individuals in our community, prosecutions will occur according to the crimes listed in the Texas Penal Code; and,

WHEREAS, the Stephens County Commissioners' Court understands, respects, and has a duty to protect the United States Constitution and the Texas Constitution.

THEREFORE, BE IT HEREBY RESOLVED, that Stephens County will, in accordance with state and federal law, and in order to properly allocate limited local resources and optimize cooperation and communication to ensure public safety and due process for all, irrespective of business status; and,

Be it **FURTHER RESOLVED** that Stephens County shall not, in accordance with state and federal law, take any direct action against any businesses or individuals based solely on their actual or perceived business status; and,

Be it **FURTHER RESOLVED** that Stephens County recognizes that state and county authorities directly license, permit and regulate certain businesses within the County and nothing in this Resolution is intended to abridge such authorities from overseeing applicable license regulations and restraints, if any, on such businesses; and,

Be it **FURTHER RESOLVED** that, subject to the foregoing, Stephens County hereby declares that Stephens County is 100% Open for Business; and considers all businesses essential; and,

Be it **FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Stephens County Commissioners' Court supports opening all businesses without restrictions or limitations that would allow all businesses to fight for their very economic survival and livelihood.

Be it **FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Stephens County Commissioners' Court, nor the County Judge in his role as Emergency Management Director will not cooperate with the State of Texas' efforts, through MTX Group, Inc, a newly organized foreign company, to trace local citizens with COVID-19. Rather, Stephens County will continue to provide tracing locally between doctors and patients.

Adopted this 8th day of June 2020.



Michael Roach, County Judge



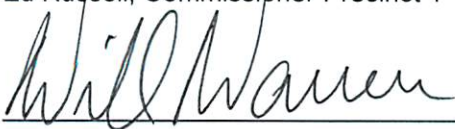
Gary Trammel, County Attorney



Ed Russell, Commissioner Precinct 1



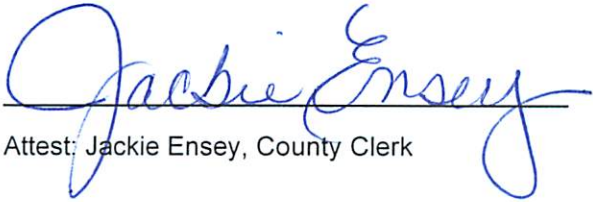
Mark McCullough, Commissioner Precinct 2



Will Warren, Commissioner Precinct 3



Eric O'Dell, Commissioner Precinct 4



Attest: Jackie Ensey, County Clerk

