Commissioner Tommy Calvert, creator of UHS tax relief for Bexar County residents, expands exemptions.

_Vice President Harris invites Calvert to her home and other court actions include funding for Artpace, San Antonio Philharmonic, and Martin Luther King Commission._

In 2018 Commissioner Tommy Calvert created the first University Health System property tax cut, a 10,000-dollar homestead exemption for those 65 plus. For the last 9 years, he has voted for more than a dozen tax cuts for Bexar County residents, and in response to citizens’ urging he has once again voted to expand the University Health System’s tax cuts for Bexar County taxpayers. In the December 12, 2023 Commissioners Court meeting he led the court to increase the homestead exemption for University Health (UHS) from 5% to 20% for tax year 2024. This landmark decision is projected to save taxpayers a staggering $52,747,738.30 more than they are already saving with the 5% exemption implemented in 2023, which Commissioner Calvert had previously pushed for with the backing of neighborhood associations like Highland Hills and Tobin Hill, hit hard in his rapidly developing precinct by appraisal increases.

**Balancing Tax Cuts with Quality Community Care**

This resolution underscores Commissioner Calvert's longstanding commitment to reducing the tax burden on the residents of Bexar County, marking more than 12 tax reductions in his nine years of service—more than any other elected official in Bexar County.

“The reason Tommy Calvert is good for the people is because he listens to the people, hears their concerns and does what he can to solve problems,” says **Martin Kutcher of the Tobin Hill Neighborhood Association**.

Meanwhile, Commissioner Calvert pushed for 8 years to get a new hospital in Selma at Retama Park and, after a bad experience the Commissioner had at the old Southwest General Hospital, Commissioner Calvert planted the seed with CEO George Hernandez that University Health System needed to find land to build a Southside hospital, which Commissioner Calvert saw come to fruition at Texas A&M San Antonio.
The northeast side billion-dollar University Health Retama Hospital will be the first of UHS's hospitals to open its doors in 2026-27. This facility will be equipped with a full suite of medical facilities, including a round-the-clock emergency department, a unit for labor and delivery, radiology and laboratory services, a pharmacy, as well as a neonatal intensive care unit and nursery. Additionally, it will cater to both adult and pediatric inpatients. Initially, the hospital will house 166 beds, with plans to expand capacity to 286 beds to accommodate the growing needs of the region. This Northeast Facility will specialize in family medicine and urgent care and will sit on 42.5 acres of land just off I-35 in Selma. The hospital will provide underserved constituents in a fast-growing area of Bexar County access to services in the San Antonio-Austin Corridor.

Commissioner Calvert also responded to the neighborhood advocacy of the Eastern Triangle Coalition, comprised of Dellcrest, Eastwood Village, Huntleigh Park, Jupe, and Dellcrest Forest neighborhood associations as they led the call for more hospitals on the eastside. In the December 12 Commissioners Court meeting, Calvert confirmed a plan he and George Hernandez had been working on to develop an urgent care clinic at the Corner of IH-10 and East Houston in the neighborhood where Calvert was born. A corner that he had revived with his famous bootleg real estate tours, Calvert joined with former Councilman Allan Warrick to bring this location within the city’s inner-city TIRZ boundaries for infrastructure. He also voted to give $1.5 million for Childsafe to locate a world-class office for abused and neglected children there.

More recently, on December 13, the Commissioner attended a groundbreaking ceremony for the University Health Vida Clinic, a project he helped fund through ARPA funds. Situated at 1411 Jaguar Parkway in San Antonio, Texas, this facility marks the inaugural structure on the University Health Palo Alto Hospital campus, opposite Texas A&M University in San Antonio. The Vida Clinic is set to offer a range of services, including preventive and primary care for both adults and children, as well as specialized women's health services encompassing prenatal care. Additionally, an entire floor of the clinic will be devoted to mental health services. Calvert looks forward to a more data-driven policy discussion from the County as a result of the school of public health.

These initiatives reflect some of his many efforts of unwavering dedication to improving healthcare access and providing tax relief to Bexar County's residents.

**Saving the Brooks Advanced Manufacturing Center and Reining in Frivolous Spending**

In the same meeting last Tuesday, Commissioner Calvert also witnessed the success of his efforts to halt County staff’s poor management of taxpayers’ contributions. Testifying before the Court, the County’s Executive Director of Economic Development David Marquez apologized for his ‘miscommunication’ regarding the Brooks Advanced Manufacturing Training Center, which the County has already spent $2.6 million dollars on in pre-construction work.

Over the past year, Marquez had developed plans to replace the project with a satellite approach, without authorization from the Court or of a formal vote from the project’s...
industry partner TX FAME. Contrary to Marquez’s previous statements citing a high demand that would justify this satellite approach, the County’s current training program has no waiting list for trainees and most of its current trainees are from outside of Bexar County. Staff was also unable to provide a written line-item budget to justify nearly one million dollars for the satellite centers for which it had allocated funds. Despite suggesting a new strategy of pursuing both the satellite approach and the Brooks Training Center, staff could not continue with smaller centers as the Court caption for the day’s session called for “status update only.” County staff’s actions could have led to severe waste but were brought to light and stopped thanks to pressure actions from Commissioner Calvert, a coalition of residents from across Bexar County, and investigative journalism from News 4 San Antonio's Mariah Medina.

For more, read News 4 San Antonio's full reports:


**Bold Support for the Arts and Culture**

Additionally, in line with his commitment to community enrichment, Commissioner Calvert spearheaded the approval of $10,000 for the Martin Luther King Commission for the 2024 Martin Luther King, Jr. Day March. This aligns with his ongoing efforts to honor and celebrate the legacy of Dr. King through impactful community initiatives.

Furthering his mission to make fine arts more accessible, Commissioner Calvert successfully secured $350,000 for the San Antonio Philharmonic and $175,000 for the Artpace Project. The funding for the San Antonio Philharmonic aims to enhance the availability of high-quality orchestral performances and educational opportunities, reflecting the rich history and diversity of San Antonio. This support will ensure the continuation of the Philharmonic's performances throughout the 2023-2024 season and also bolster the Old Spanish Trail Cultural Corridor.

The Artpace Project, another beneficiary of Commissioner Calvert's advocacy, received a joint motion from him and Commissioner Justin Rodriguez for a $175,000 grant. This funding is a significant contribution towards the $1.6 million renovation of Artpace's 27-year-old rooftop deck. The revamped space will feature a solar panel roof, food service area, and landscaping, creating a vibrant hub for public events in downtown San Antonio.
Through these actions, Commissioner Tommy Calvert continues to demonstrate his deep commitment to the welfare and prosperity of Bexar County’s residents, ensuring a more equitable and culturally rich community for all.

Award Received at 3R Global Outreach, Inc.’s First Annual Awards Ceremony

On Friday, Dec. 15, Commissioner Calvert was also recognized for his inspirational trail blazing efforts, legacy, and impact within the local community at 3R Global Outreach’s First Annual Awards Ceremony on the northwest side. The 3R Global Outreach Inc. mission is to address critical issues such as youth empowerment, mental health awareness, elder care, support for single parents, immigrants, and refugees, among others. Their holistic approach to societal betterment aligns closely with Commissioner Calvert's vision and efforts in the community.

Commissioner Tommy Calvert Attends Vice President Kamala Harris's Holiday Party

At the invitation of the Vice President of the United States, Commissioner Tommy Calvert attended her holiday party on December 11, at the Naval Observatory, residence for the nation’s Vice Presidents since Gerald Ford. The event boasted a ‘who’s who’ of national leadership such as Iowa Senator Tom Harkin, Maryland Congressman Jaime Raskin, Congressman Emanuel Cleaver, II, the former head of the Congressional Black Caucus, State AFL-CIO leaders, and state NAACP Presidents.
The Vice President thanked leaders who are doing the work to preserve democracy and freedom against America’s greatest threats to democracy since WWII and reminded those gathered that we should take some time to celebrate the work community leaders do before 2024 turns into the fight for freedom the Biden administration plans to wage against Trumpism.

“I thanked the Vice President for giving hope to those of us in Texas fighting for freedom of women’s rights, unity and freedom for people to have the ability to live their American Dream,” said Calvert.

“The people in this room are the people protecting the fight for our democracy. They know what we know, that democracy – the nature of our democracy has a duality to it: on the one hand incredible strength, what an intact democracy does in terms of protecting and perseverance in terms of individual rights and liberty, on the other hand it’s incredibly fragile and it’s only as strong as our ability to fight. And fight we will. And when we fight we win. So get some rest during the holiday season and we will start the new year and I will see you on the road,” explained Kamala Harris, Vice President of the United States.

Photos, video and interviews from the Vice President’s home are available upon request.