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Chair Shapiro and Members:

My name is John Adams and I am a school board member from Dripping Springs ISD. I am here to testify in support of SB 8. My testimony will focus on three new flexibilities that SB 8 would provide: salary reductions, furloughs and moving the 45-day nonrenewal notification deadline.

Allowing districts to reduce employee salaries and furlough employees would mean that we have new strategies for meaningfully reducing payroll expenses in order to balance our budget.

No manager likes to reduce salaries. But, looking at current LBB data, our district will likely lose \$2.1 (412 per student) during 2011-12 and \$3million (\$563 per student) during 2012-13. Because we didn't know until last week how much revenue we would be losing, and to be honest I am not sure we know yet how much we'll lose, our district developed, with community and staff input, proposed budget reductions. Comptroller Susan Combs rated Dripping Springs a 5 star district for its fiscal and academic results - one of 43 5 star districts in Texas. That tells me and anyone else who looks into the data that we already had a lean budget. So every single cut we are looking in Dripping Springs is bad for our student's education. None of them are good. Allowing school districts to reduce salaries or use unpaid furloughs are simply additional tools in our tool box to help us balance our budget. I find them equally distasteful but it will give my board greater flexibility.


I also support moving the 45 day notice of nonrenewal until 10 days before the end of the school year.

- The 45-day deadline is disruptive to the instruction of students.
- The 45-day deadline occurs before we receive the tax rolls and can determine how much local revenue we will have for the next school year.

Moving the deadline for notifying teachers whether they will be offered a contract for the next school year just makes management sense. And, it puts school districts more in line with other employers who notify their employees when their contracts expire whether they will get another contract or not.

Let me be clear. And, continuing the use of metaphors like kick the can down the road, SB 8 is a collection of new tools that boards can use now to help balance the budget. Its like we have a road side emergency and just need a couple of tools to get to the next town. But if we are still using tools like this 2 or 3 or 5 years from now – it will be like driving a car around with a cracked block that has a piece of duct tape slapped over it.

I'm happy to answer any questions you may have. Thank you for allowing me the opportunity to express my support for SB 8.


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