



# MIDLAND CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

April 20, 2021

Senate Finance Committee,

This letter is to inform you of our support of House Bill 115. Our community and businesses are very proud of the work that is being done by The Field's Edge and we support the continuance of that work. In efforts to help them continue to the best of their ability, we ask that you vote favorably on HB 115. The tax-exemption outlined in this bill has already been granted, but has been bracketed to Austin, Texas, HB 115 would allow it to be granted in Midland, Texas as well. Given the long history of the property having a tax-exemption status, there will be no noticeable loss to tax dollars in our community and a very noticeable gain for an organization who is filling a much-needed role in our community. Homelessness is a problem that takes a unique response as well as commitment to seeing these individuals succeed. The Field's Edge is impacting our community in a much greater way through their work than with what their tax dollars would accomplish.

The Field's Edge is privately funded and saves our local government a substantial amount of money. Last year, the Perryman Group did an economic study on the cost of homelessness in Midland and found that each chronically homeless person costs the Midland local government about \$17,450 in direct tax dollars. The Perryman Group also found that for an investment of \$30,000, their cost to build someone a home, it yields over \$400,000 in positive economic activity. In addition to this financial impact, each chronically homeless person lifted off the streets creates 4 jobs.

This bill is important because construction will be completed this year and the land they are developing will be rolled out of their wildlife valuation. Without this bill they will have to start paying property taxes on the developed portion which will also trigger a 3-year rollback tax measure. If this bill is not approved, they are looking at a substantial tax bill next year on their property that has historically been tax free under the 1-D-1 agriculture valuation.

We would greatly appreciate your support on HB 115 and the positive impact it will have on our local economy and community at large.

Sincerely,

Robert E. Burns  
President/CEO  
Midland Chamber of Commerce

