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**Testimony on Operation Lone Star**

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Operation Lone Star (OLS) is harmful to Texans for two reasons. 1) Operation Lone Star has led to an increase in frivolous citations and Texas Department of Public Safety (DPS) vehicle pursuit deaths and 2) OLS is diverting funds for necessary programs that would benefit Texans at large.

1. Operation Lone Star has led to an increase in frivolous citations and the Texas Department of Public Safety (DPS) vehicle pursuit deaths

Residents of border communities have borne the brunt of Governor Abbott’s unconstitutional scheme. As Texas Department of Public Safety (DPS) troopers have been deployed to border communities, pretextual traffic citations targeting individuals fitting a stereotype have increased. These traffic citations have made residents feel like they have lost their civil liberties and freedom. For our community members who are already struggling, these fines, regardless of how minor the fine, will be “devastating to families living paycheck to paycheck.” Additionally, civil liberties groups have linked DPS vehicle pursuits to 30 deaths in south Texas. Operation Lone Star has put once calm and quiet border communities at imminent risk not just from rampant law enforcement, but by attracting white nationalists and hopefuls alongside opportunistic vloggers and YouTubers invading these towns for controversy and content. Texans are not protected by OLS, rather, our community at large is being hurt by the diversion of funds from necessary programs.

2. Texans are suffering because millions of dollars are being diverted from State programs to fund this racist and unconstitutional scheme

Governor Abbott’s racist operation has and continues to cost over 4 billion dollars in taxpayer money while Texans continue to suffer from a lack of healthcare, education, a reliable power grid, and affordable housing. Governor Abbott boldly misused federal COVID-19 dollars and the Texas Department of Public Safety estimates that it spends about \$2.5 million per week for 1,600 troopers involved with OLS. While Governor Abbott continues to bleed Texans of their resources, we continue to be one of the worst states for affordable housing, lowest in child well being, and an unreliable power grid to name a few shortcomings. Texans do not need more border protection. Texans need more money to fund programs that can benefit our communities. We must not let Governor Abbott continue misusing taxpayer dollars on unconstitutional and racist political stunts. Texans deserve better.