



Carol L. Bush

ELLIS COUNTY JUDGE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Office of Ellis County Judge Carol Bush
972-825-5011
Waxahachie, Texas, April 7, 2015

STATEMENT FROM ELLIS COUNTY JUDGE CAROL BUSH

"The allegations against those members and affiliates of the ESD #6 Volunteer Fire Department who have been arrested are shocking and appalling. I am concerned for the victim of the alleged crime; but, I am also concerned for the continued safety of those citizens of Ellis County who depend upon ESD #6 for basic fire protection.

Ellis County does not maintain its own fire department. Fire protection across the county is provided by both municipal fire departments and by volunteer fire departments. Pursuant to the Texas Health and Safety Code, the volunteer fire departments are managed by Emergency Services Districts, which are independent political subdivisions with taxing authority, governed by their own boards of directors. The authority of Ellis County is limited to appointing those directors and filling vacancies. The county has no legal authority over the operations of either the ESDs or the volunteer fire departments.

I am confident that this event is not representative of the character of the majority of fire service professionals in the county. It is my understanding that various other ESDs and municipal fire departments are in the process of discussing how they will work together, if necessary, to prevent any gaps in fire coverage. Notwithstanding this event, we are blessed with a strong culture of professionalism among the county's fire services. I am grateful for their leadership and commitment to public safety.

Additional inquiries should be directed to Emergency Services District #6."

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