



August 6, 2024

Martie Garcia Vela
Law Office of Martie Garcia Vela, PC
509 N. San Antonio
Rio Grande City, TX 78582
Via Email: martie.garcia@gmail.com

Re: City of Escobares

Ms. Vela:

I write to you in your role as City Attorney for the City of Escobares ("City"). I represent political committee ProjectRedTX, which is involved in various election campaigns in Starr County.

My client informs me that a candidate for Starr County Sheriff is being told by City officials – including Police Chief Pedro Estrada and Councilmember Fernando Garza - that he cannot park his vehicle on City property if his vehicle features a political message on its exterior. These officials have cited no legal authority justifying their efforts to silence political speech (likely because no such authority exists).

To deny a resident access to public property because his or her vehicle bears a political message is a clear violation of that person's protected political speech and the First Amendment of the U.S. Constitution. As I am sure that you know, a municipality may not limit non-commercial signage on a person's vehicle. To do so would be an impermissible content-based restriction on free speech.

Your client's conduct is subjecting the City to significant legal peril. We hereby demand that the City immediately cease its efforts to suppress the free speech of Texans with whom it disagrees politically. Please assure your client that First Amendment applies within the Escobares city limits, and that if this misconduct continues, the City will be forced to defend its illegal practices in court.

Sincerely,

Ross Fischer
Ross Fischer Law, PLLC

