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City Council Representative - District 3

PRESS RELEASE
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

There have been public inquiries regarding our District's gas expenses, and I aim to clarify any misconceptions. I find it disappointing that the administrative review conducted by the Auditor and the Financial Oversight and Audit Committee (FOAC) was mishandled. The Internal Auditor Charter provides specific steps for the Auditor to follow, and unfortunately, the City of El Paso's Auditor failed to comply with the requirements outlined. The Auditor neglected to allow my office sufficient time and process to address any "observations" and failed to fulfill the "Accountability" criteria on page two of the Charter. A proper and collaborative approach would have led to a more satisfactory outcome.

Law enforcement conducted a thorough and unbiased investigation, which did not reveal any findings, observations, or violations of any laws. Therefore, FOAC's recommendation to initiate a new investigation undermines the diligent efforts of the El Paso Police Department. Pursuing this unnecessary course of action requires taxpayers to cover the expenses of hiring new legal counsel to review gas expenses. I agree with the Internal Auditor's suggestion to suspend the gas cards and instead provide a more effective way to allocate business-related allowances for District-related expenses. I am glad to continue cooperating fully with the Auditor and the City of El Paso, as it serves the best interests of our community.

We must shift our focus to other essential issues, such as hiring a police chief and city manager, developing a climate action plan, and addressing the humanitarian crisis. To this end, our family has decided to pay the City of El Paso \$6,700, an amount that covers a year of authorized gas expenses, using personal funds. Additionally, we have returned the gas card to the City Manager's office. I hope this action effectively resolves any distraction caused by politically motivated attacks. Lastly, I urge all stakeholders, including the city council and mayor, to prioritize critical issues over distractions. I encourage Mayor Leeser to cancel the Special Council Meeting he has called on May 11, a day that requires our full attention as Title 42 expires, and we have important work ahead.

Now, more than ever, we must collaborate and find the best solutions that benefit all residents of El Paso and Texas. Lastly, I urge everyone to cast their vote against Prop J.