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Sen. Rodríguez statement on judicial Findings of Fact re Duranguito

El Paso – An Austin judge today released Findings of Fact and Conclusions of Law regarding her previous ruling that the public did not authorize the City to build a sports arena in Duranguito or anywhere in Downtown El Paso.

In the findings and conclusions, Judge Amy Clark Meachum notes that the legal basis for proceeding are the city's ordinance authorizing a bond election, and the ballot language that appeared during the election. In neither case was sports mentioned or connected with a "multipurpose performing arts facility," and the context in which it appeared never mentioned sports. The full ruling, which walks through the wording and context, and elements of law used to arrive at the conclusion, is attached.

The Senator's statement is below, as well as a copy of an op-ed published over the weekend in which he addressed this very issue.

It is important that the public understand that the City continues to obscure the court's ruling, which cannot be more clear. It is misleading for the City and arena proponents to continue claiming that El Pasoans approved a Downtown sports arena. We voted for a quality of life bond that included library improvements, a children's museum, a Hispanic Cultural Center, and a multipurpose performing arts and entertainment facility.

The words "sports arena" are nowhere to be found on the ballot or ordinance. Also not on the ballot was the proposed location of the multipurpose center. Regardless of whether you think voters understood that what they were voting upon was a sports arena, the demolition of Duranguito was not on the ballot. However, a vote to save the neighborhood should soon be on the ballot, since a citizens' petition with more than 2,200 signatures has been submitted to the City. There is a better way to accomplish our shared goals of progress for El Paso that preserves history, supports people and

neighborhoods, and creates the type of unique and authentic value proposition that attracts businesses and tourists.

José Rodríguez represents Texas Senate District 29, which includes the counties of El Paso, Hudspeth, Culberson, Jeff Davis, and Presidio. He represents both urban and rural constituencies, and more than 350 miles of the Texas-Mexico border. Senator Rodríguez currently serves as the Chairman of the Texas Senate Democratic Caucus, and is a member of the Senate Committees on Natural Resources and Economic Development; Transportation; Veteran Affairs and Border Security; and Agriculture, Water, and Rural Affairs (Vice Chair).

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