

NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

APPRAISAL DISTRICT FALLS SHORT IN STATE'S PROPERTY VALUE STUDY

The Clay County Appraisal District and Henrietta Independent School District (HISD) learned on February 1, 2022 that the values in the school district did not reach the standards required by the Texas State Comptroller. Even though local taxpayers saw a significant increase last year and composite values increased \$40 million, the state study shows a shortfall of \$50 million for 2022 property values, which will mean that Henrietta ISD will potentially lose \$300,000 in state financial aid for the school district.

The study is being appealed by HISD, but the likelihood of meeting the state standard is not good. Forty million dollars is primarily in home values, while ten million dollars of value was lost because a low appraisal of industrial and utilities.

For local taxpayers, this means that values must increase again in 2023 to comply with the state mandate of being at 95% of market value or greater. Values will be set by the state in late April based on the most recent sales data.

There is a little good news for taxpayers. The maximum increase for owners who have a homestead exemption is 10% more than the previous year, and for disabled or over-65 homesteads, the school tax is capped or "frozen", so unless an addition is made on one's home, the taxes will remain constant. However, that cap is not available for other tax units.

What can taxpayers do? When the notices are mailed, each owner should review the information and see the value the district is proposing. Some taxpayers have recently refinanced their home or purchased their home and may have a fee appraisal which they can present as evidence of value to the district. It will certainly be considered as fee appraisers actually get to see inside a home and can better evaluate the property. If the taxpayer feels that the value is beyond what they could sell their home for, they should file a protest with the Clay County Appraisal District and discuss the value with an appraiser. If an agreement can be made, then it is not necessary to go through the formal process of an appeal to the Appraisal Review Board (ARB). If an agreement cannot be reached with the appraiser, then the ARB will hear the appeal and will rule based on the preponderance of evidence presented.

Additionally, the state legislature is in session and may make changes to law which would increase the homestead exemption for schools which will lessen the property tax financial burden. The most talked about proposal would increase the exemption from \$40,000 to \$70,000. Taxpayers should reach out to their legislators and let them know this break is needed, as well as any other concerns regarding property taxes.

Questions may be directed to the Clay County Appraisal District at (940) 538-4311