



Vera Ducks Debate, Avoids Public Forums with Challenger

Ethics violations, tax hikes likely topics should Vera, Hernandez face off

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Oct. 14, 2022

AUSTIN, TX – Nearly a month after Starr County Judge candidate Maria Yvette Hernandez (R-Rio Grande City) challenged 25-year incumbent Eloy Vera to participate in a public debate, Vera still has not replied.

“With Vera's record of raising taxes, skirting campaign finance laws, and increasing his salary at taxpayer expense, I can see why he wouldn't want to show up at a debate and be held accountable,” said Wayne Hamilton of #ProjectRedTX. “It's time he stands before the people of Starr County and discusses these very serious issues with his opponent.”

Among other concerns raised regarding Vera's years in office, public records show he owes thousands of dollars in delinquent property taxes and related fees, all while Starr County homeowners and landowners have seen double-digit property tax increases on his watch.

Past reporting also highlights accusations that Vera ignored government purchasing protocols, supported a quid pro quo, manipulated local elections, and violated multiple campaign ethics laws including failure to file legally-required disclosures regarding who was contributing to his campaign and how he was spending the money.

Additionally, during the height of the COVID-19 pandemic, Vera's mismanagement of county health protocols made national headlines for the instatement of a so-called “death panel” that decided which patients would receive treatment while others were “sent home to die.”

Hernandez' campaign first pitched a debate on September 20, recommending a nonpartisan organization such as the Rio Grande City Rotary Club should be the host, with journalists from local news sources including The Monitor and El Tejano serving as moderators.

To date, Vera has not agreed to a debate or acknowledged the public request made by Hernandez' campaign.

More information regarding Vera's ethics violations, including copies of sworn complaints, is available at projectredtx.com.

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