

## **PRESS RELEASE**

**October 13, 2022**

Citizens of Hunt County,

Various County offices have received questions about the meaning of the “65+ Tax Freeze” on the November ballot as “Proposition A.” This press release explains the meaning of the proposition and tells you where to find sample ballots.

Sample ballots for all precincts may be found on the County’s website – [HuntCounty.net](http://HuntCounty.net) – by using the drop-down menus to go to “Departments,” then “Voter Registration / Elections,” then choosing the precinct box listed on voter ID card. Every precinct in Hunt County will vote on the Proposition, and the ballots all list “Proposition A” on the back page of the ballot.

### **A “For” vote means that you want the tax freeze to become law.**

If the Proposition passes, and you are the owner of a home with a homestead exemption – which must be filed with the Hunt County Central Appraisal District – **your home’s Hunt County property taxes will not increase if the Appraisal District’s records show you are over 65 or are legally disabled.** That freeze cannot be removed by the County – only the Texas Legislature.

The Texas Constitution sets the rules for this freeze, and they were not chosen by the County. The rules are:

1. If you “improve” your property (i.e., you add on a sunroom or build a swimming pool), the value of the property and the taxes on that value may also increase.
2. The “improvement” increase will be limited to the value added to your property by the change to your property. That increase will not apply to repairs after storms, fires, or other damage. It also will not apply to any changes that you are required to make to follow the law – like replacing a faulty septic system or painting your house to meet a city code.
3. If you meet the freeze requirements, and you pass away with a spouse who is over age 55 at the time of your death, your spouse’s property taxes will remain frozen for the rest of their lives if they remain in the same house, maintain ownership, and make no changes to the property.
4. You or a surviving spouse may transfer your “percentage of savings” to a new house in Hunt County – or other Texas County that has adopted the same freeze, if the new house is a homestead property (not apartments or rented houses). In other words, if the freeze is approved, and you end up paying \$500 in County taxes, but you would otherwise be paying \$1,000 in County taxes, your freeze “savings” are 50%. You or a surviving spouse may transfer that percentage of savings to your new homestead, regardless of its value.
5. This tax freeze does not apply to commercial buildings, empty land, apartments, rental houses, or any properties owned by people who do not meet the requirements.
6. If you own multiple properties, your property taxes will only be frozen on one of them – whichever one is your residence homestead in the Appraisal District’s records.
7. If you are over age 65 or legally disabled but live in a homestead owned by someone else, that other person’s taxes will not be frozen.
8. This new tax freeze will only apply to the Hunt County portion of your property taxes – not all property taxes. If you have a homestead in Hunt County, you currently pay property taxes for all local governments covering your property – including school district, hospital and possibly city taxes (if you live in the city limits). If the taxes on your homestead already reflect 65+/legal disability tax freezes from other governments – including school tax freezes, which are mandated under state law – there is no need to make a new application. The Appraisal District will automatically add the County tax freeze.

Hunt County Judge Bobby Stovall