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The state's largest law enforcement union has announced an initiative to bring civil service rights to all employees of Williamson County

AUSTIN — “County workers are facing a volatile daily workplace environment that is hard to fathom outside of the political vortex of Williamson County, Texas,” said Charley Wilkison, Executive Director of the Combined Law Enforcement Associations of Texas, or CLEAT.

- *The Williamson County Commissioners Court voted to contract between the county Sheriff's Office, and a law enforcement reality show that broadcast officer encounters with the public.
- *The county sheriff rented an entire theatre so the staff and families could watch the show together. Employees who complained about the show claim they were retaliated against by the administration.
- *Former employees have filed suit against the Sheriff.
- *That same commissioners court has now voted to rescind its relationship with Live PD and refused to renew federal grants for technology and equipment for the Sheriff's Office.
- *Jail employees report seeing State Jail Standards investigators arriving to inspect jail conditions driving vehicles displaying signs in support of the opponent of the current Sheriff.
- *Sheriff's deputies accused of wrongdoing report being dropped by their statewide union and denied coverage. That same statewide union has publicly endorsed the Sheriff's opponent.
- *The District Attorney pushed for a Grand Jury indictment of the Sheriff.
- *Employees report being harassed and questioned about the behavior of other employees.
- *Employees feel they will be falsely accused of wrongdoing and believe they will be terminated for political reasons.

“Civilian county employees who are not connected to the Sheriff’s Office believe they risk political retribution for exercising their right to support any candidate. These ground conditions are just impossible for regular working folks who should never have to deal with the open and hostile politicization of their everyday work on behalf of the taxpayers of Williamson County,” said Wilkison.

“It’s our intent to support a county-wide petition that will legally force an election for the civil service rights of all county employees. CLEAT will join in an education campaign to bring these shameful working conditions to light. Employees need the legal protection of civil service to protect them from plain old political oppression in the workplace. Employees need fairness, openness, and the ability to appeal political disciplinary actions, demotions, and terminations,” said Sgt. Todd Harrison, President of the Combined Law Enforcement Associations of Texas.

“Our hardworking employees need to be left alone to do what’s right, follow their training, and to be free from fear and political persecution,” said Wilkison.

The petition development campaign has already begun and will be carried out over the next several months. A civil service ballot initiative would be placed before voters on a future uniform election date.