



**Texas AFT**

*A Union of Professionals*  
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# News Release

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## **Texas AFT endorses Philip Cortez for Texas House District 117**

Texas AFT, the state chapter of the American Federation of Teachers, is proud to announce today the endorsement of Philip Cortez for state representative in Texas House District 117.

Texas AFT President Louis Malfaro said: "Our members in San Antonio want to bring Philip Cortez back to the Texas House because he is exactly what schoolchildren, their families, and educators urgently need. He is a 100-percent reliable advocate for the resources and supports our students and educators require."

Added Malfaro: "Philip Cortez proved his mettle as a state representative from this district in the 2013 legislative session. Time after time, on every tough vote that separated the real friends of public education from the fair-weather friends, Philip Cortez came down on the side of schoolkids and their teachers."

As the record of that 2013 Legislature demonstrates, Cortez fought to restore billions of dollars of public school funding and to halt the escalation of college tuition costs. He co-authored legislation that has helped turn the tide against the overuse and misuse of standardized testing in our schools. He staunchly opposed diversion of scarce taxpayer dollars to unaccountable private schools via vouchers. He fought for parents to have time off from work to attend their child's school activities.

In the next legislative session, Malfaro said, "Public education again will come under attack from profiteering special interests with a three-step strategy for the hostile takeover of public schools. They want to underfund our public schools, declare them a failure based on a faulty, test-driven accountability system, and then privatize the schools. Philip Cortez can be counted on to oppose every part of that strategy. He supports a positive agenda to strengthen neighborhood public schools, by providing students with the resources and services they need. He is on the side of parents and educators who want to continue the turn away from the misuse of standardized tests and test-based sanctions. And he knows that handing over public education to private-school operators or corporate charter-school chains is no way to help communities improve their schools."

Responding to the Texas AFT endorsement of his candidacy, Cortez said: "I am honored to have the support of the 65,000-member-strong Texas American Federation of Teachers. With their endorsement, I move one step closer to returning to the Capitol to fight for a higher quality of life for teachers, counselors, custodians, cafeteria workers, bus drivers, and all other education professionals represented by Texas AFT. On to victory in November 2016!"

*Texas AFT represents more than 65,000 teachers, paraprofessionals, support personnel, and higher-education employees across the state.*

*Texas AFT is affiliated with the 1.6-million-member American Federation of Teachers.*

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