

HB 1378

MY NAME IS JENNIFER MCCALL. I AM A TAXPAYER AND A PUBLIC SERVANT. I SERVE KENDALL COUNTY AS A COUNTY COMMISSIONER AND I ALSO SERVE AS VICE-PRESIDENT ON THE HILL COUNTRY ENERGY SUB REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION. THESE UTILITY GRADE BATTERY ENERGY STORAGE SYSTEMS, BESS, ARE BEING BUILT NEAR ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS, NURSING HOMES, HOSPITALS AND JAILS. THERE ARE MULTIPLE INSTANCES WHERE BESS SYSTEMS ARE BEING BUILT WITHIN A MILE OF EACH OF THESE. IT WOULD TAKE 48 SECONDS FOR THE TOXIC PLUME TO TRAVEL A MILE FROM A UTILITY GRADE BESS FAILURE. IN THE EVENT OF AN EVACUATION, HOW ARE WE GOING TO EVACUATE A NURSING HOME, A HOSPITAL, AN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL OR A JAIL SAFELY AND WITHOUT CONSEQUENCE. WE ARE FINDING THAT ALL ACROSS THE STATE OF TEXAS, BESS FACILITIES ARE BEING BUILT CLOSE TO MULTIPLES OF THESE INSTITUTIONS. ARE WE GOING TO SET PRISONERS FREE, HOW CAN WE GET ALL OF THE SCHOOL CHILDREN, ELDERLY AND PATIENTS IN HOSPITALS WITH LIFE SUSTAINING MACHINERY OUT? IN A BESS FAILURE, THE TOXIC GASES ALONE COULD POTENTIALLY INCAPACITATE THE FIRST RESPONDERS AND THOSE WHOSE LIVES THEY ARE TRYING TO SAVE. THIS COULD BE CATASTOPHIC. THE NEW TECHNOLOGY FOR BESS IS OUTDATED IN 2-3 YEARS. THE MOSS LANDING BATTERY TECHNOLOGY WAS NEW WHEN IT WAS INSTALLED IN 2022. IT'S 2025 AND IT WAS "OUTDATED" WHEN IT CAUGHT FIRE. WE SHOULDN'T BE PUTTING THESE NEW LITHIUM-ION BATTERIES IN LOCATIONS WITH THE EXPECTATION THAT NOTHING IS GOING TO HAPPEN. THE 4 PROPOSED BUILDS FOR KENDALL AND KERR COUNTIES NEED TO BE SET BACK AT LEAST 500 YARDS. IT'S A START. THERE IS CURRENTLY A UTILITY GRADE BESS IN TEXAS LOCATED JUST 10 YARDS AWAY FROM A RESIDENTIAL HOME OF A VETERAN WHO SERVED OUR COUNTRY. WE WERE NOT ABLE TO PROTECT HIM AND HIS FAMILY. WHEN I WAS SWORN IN 120 DAYS AGO, I COMMITTED TO PROTECT THE HEALTH SAFETY AND WELFARE OF THE CONSTITUENTS I SERVE. I SUPPORT THIS BILL HB 1378 AND I APPRECIATE REPRESENTATIVE VIRDELL IN HIS EFFORTS TO PROTECT ALL THE CITIZENS OF TEXAS.