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**TEXAS MUSIC PROJECT LAUNCHES “DON’T MESS WITH TEXAS MUSIC” CD SERIES
TO RAISE FUNDS FOR STATE SCHOOL MUSIC PROGRAMS**

*Proceeds from the Sale of the Compilation Featuring Willie Nelson, The Dixie Chicks and Other
Texas Artists Will Support First Statewide Music Education Campaign of its Kind*

AUSTIN, Texas, Aug. 29, 2003 – Deep in the heart of Texas and throughout the state, music education programs are receiving a boost from several Lone Star artists with the Sept. 1 release of the Texas Music Project’s first compilation CD, “Don’t Mess With Texas Music.” The Social Marketing Resource Center, a non-profit organization, recently launched the Texas Music Project to help strengthen and restore music education programs in Texas public schools, and all proceeds from the compilation CD will go to support these programs in schools around the state.

Volume I of the “Don’t Mess With Texas Music” CD series showcases a variety of country, rock, blues and soul music from 21 Texas artists, including Willie Nelson, Stevie Ray Vaughan, the Dixie Chicks, Erykah Badu, Clarence “Gatemouth” Brown, Lucinda Williams, Boz Scaggs, Marcia Ball, Delbert McClinton and others. The CD, which features tracks such as “Night Life” by Willie Nelson, honorary chairman of the Texas Music Project, and “Some Days You Gotta Dance” by the Dixie Chicks, includes songs from 11 GRAMMY Award winners who have received a total of 37 GRAMMYS, three Country Music Award winners who have earned 19 CMAs in all, and four W.C. Handy Blues Award winners receiving 17 Handys.

The “Don’t Mess With Texas Music” CD is available for sale at all Texas Starbucks Coffee, Tom Thumb Food and Pharmacy, Randalls Food Markets, Brook Mays Music (including H&H and Caldwell Music stores), Borders Books and Music, CD retailers throughout the state, and via the Texas Music Project’s Web site (www.texasmusicproject.org). In addition, local schools and arts, education and music organizations will be able to use the CD for fund-raising efforts.

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“Unfortunately, music education programs are disappearing from our schools in Texas and around the country,” said Bruce Orr, co-founder and executive director of the Texas Music Project. “All children should be able to experience the positive benefits of music, and it is the hope of the Texas Music Project to raise awareness and funding for music education programs through the sale of this first compilation CD.”

In addition to support from the music community, more than 30 music and arts organizations have joined the Texas Music Project to support music education. The principal organizations, led by the Social Marketing Resource Center, include the Texas Music Educators Association, the Texas Commission on the Arts and the Texas Coalition for Quality Arts Education.

In a unique non-profit alliance, these groups are working together to define Texas music education needs, create programs, conduct grassroots fund-raising initiatives and implement the “Don’t Mess With Texas Music” public awareness campaign. The Texas Commission on the Arts will facilitate the distribution of funding, which will be accessible to all public schools in Texas through grant applications and awarded based on need. It is the intention of the Texas Music Project that grants be used to support the implementation of full-time, rigorous music education curricula.

“It’s a sad reality to see children lose the opportunity to experience the gift of music in school due to ongoing budget cuts,” said Orr. “Purchasing the ‘Don’t Mess With Texas Music’ CD is one of the easiest ways for the community to support and preserve music education in Texas schools, while also making a difference in our children’s future.”

To purchase the “Don’t Mess With Texas Music” compilation CD, make a donation or learn more about how to get involved with the Texas Music Project, please visit www.texasmusicproject.org. The CD will be sold for the suggested retail price of \$14.95. All proceeds from sales of the compilation will be used to support music education programs throughout Texas.

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Led by the Social Marketing Resource Center, a non-profit organization, the Texas Music Project is a joint, long-term initiative uniting the Texas music industry with the State of Texas, the Texas Music Educators Association, the Texas Commission on the Arts, and the Texas Coalition for Quality Arts Education. The primary mission of the Texas Music Project is to help strengthen and restore rigorous music education to Texas schools, raise awareness of the positive impact music education has on students and promote the Texas music industry. Texas Music Project creates meaningful music education programs for Texas schools in need, conducts the “Don’t Mess With Texas Music” awareness campaign, and markets unique fund-raising products (CDs, merchandise) and events featuring Texas artists, music and performance venues. For more information on the Texas Music Project, visit www.texasmusicproject.org.