



The Legislature State of Texas

June 16, 2017

The Honorable [REDACTED]
City of Houston Council Member, [REDACTED]
City Hall Annex
900 Bagby, First Floor
Houston, TX 77002

VIA ELECTRONIC DELIVERY

Dear Council Member [REDACTED]

We write today to urge you and your fellow members of the Houston City Council to support Mayor Sylvester Turner's recommendation to join the litigation challenging the constitutionality of Senate Bill 4 (SB 4), the so-called "sanctuary cities" bill recently signed into law by Governor Greg Abbott.

We are disappointed in the state leadership's decision to champion and push this ill-conceived legislation into law, but with the Council's approval, we would be pleased to see the City of Houston officially join the cities of Dallas, San Antonio, Austin, and El Cenizo, as well as El Paso County and Maverick County in challenging this discriminatory law.

SB 4 has several flawed provisions that unlawfully target immigrant communities, expose Texans to unlawful violations of due process, and erode essential trust between police and the public. As argued by the plaintiffs in this lawsuit, SB 4 would allow individual law enforcement officers to decide on their own whether and how to question individuals about their immigration status, while simultaneously stripping sheriffs and police chiefs of any authority to set policies to guide officers on immigration checks. That provision of the law will result in racial profiling and violate the Fourteenth Amendment's Equal Protection clause because Latinos and other minorities would be subject to discriminatory stops and questioning by law enforcement officials who have no training and would not be subject to limits on when they question individuals about immigration status.

Current population data indicates that 44 percent of the total Texas population is Latino, Asian-American, or Arab-American; even more striking is that nearly 54 percent of Texans under the age of 18 fall within one of these three groups. These are the population groups who would be subject to widespread police profiling and harassment as a result of SB 4. African-Americans, an additional 11.5 percent of the Texas population, already face widespread racial profiling that could be exacerbated by the permission to profile extended in SB 4. All told, the provisions of SB 4 could directly affect a majority of all Texans and nearly two-thirds of Texas minors.

We repeatedly warned that by passing this law, Texas would be following the failed script attempted by California Governor Pete Wilson in defending the notorious Proposition 187 in 1994, and most recently by Arizona's SB 1070 in 2010 before the Supreme Court struck down key provisions of the law in 2012.

We respectfully ask you to support our great city's immigrant and minority communities by joining other Texas cities and counties in the lawsuit against this unconscionable law that will do nothing more than sow broad mistrust of law enforcement. As a community, the City of Houston--the most racially/ethnically diverse large metropolitan area in the nation--cannot stand idle while the state tacitly encourages racial profiling and discrimination.

Thank you for your attention to our concerns, and we look forward to working with you on the matter.

Sincerely,



Alma Allen

State Representative, House District 131



Mary Ann Perez

State Representative, House District 144



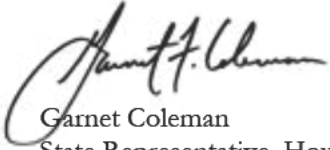
Carol Alvarado

State Representative, House District 145



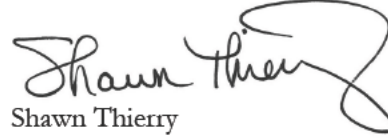
Ron Reynolds

State Representative, House District 27



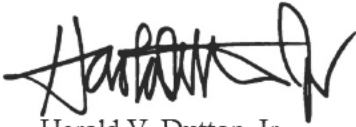
Garnet Coleman

State Representative, House District 147



Shawn Thierry

State Representative, House District 146



Harold V. Dutton, Jr.

State Representative, House District 142



Senfronia Thompson

State Representative, House District 141



Jessica Farrar

State Representative, House District 148



Hubert Vo

State Representative, House District 149



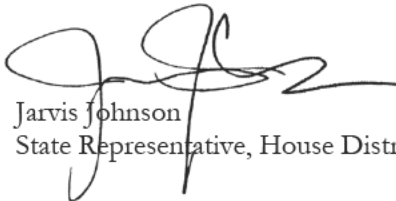
Ana Hernandez

State Representative, House District 143



Armando Walle

State Representative, House District 140



Jarvis Johnson

State Representative, House District 139



Gene Wu

State Representative, House District 137