



CITY OF HOUSTON

Sylvester Turner

Mayor

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April 11, 2023

The Honorable John Whitmire
Chairman, Senate Committee on Criminal Justice
P.O. Box 12068- Capitol Station
Austin, Texas 78711

Dear Chairman Whitmire and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to express my support of Senate Bill 1970 by Senator Paul Bettencourt. During the 87th Legislative Session, the legislature passed HB 2315 and SB 1495 which enacted the “Reckless Driving Exhibition” in Penal Code 42.03(f). However, the “Reckless Driving Exhibition” offense is not enumerated under Engaging in Organized Criminal Activity (Penal Code, Chapter 71), restricting police from seizing the vehicle used in the conduct (Chapter 59).

As you know, Houston and many other cities in Texas are experiencing higher than normal street racing and street takeover events on our roads. These reckless events are extremely dangerous, a nuisance to the community, and pose an immediate threat to public safety in our communities. Moreover, the City of Houston has reported several injuries and even deaths as a result of these activities. By addressing this unintended consequence, officers will have the tools to seize vehicles if and when appropriate.

I am hopeful that this legislation does not find itself entangled in political partisanship; rather, it be considered as a measurable step for public safety. I appreciate your favorable consideration of SB 1970, and I look forward to working with you throughout the duration of the 88th Legislative Session.

Sincerely,

Sylvester Turner
Mayor