



CITY OF HOUSTON

Sylvester Turner

Mayor

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The Honorable Joan Huffman, Chair, the Honorable Bryan Hughes, Vice Chair, and the Honorable Members of the Senate Committee on State Affairs:

I write today to join other Texas mayors, businesses that range from international corporations to “mom-and-pop” stores, transgender Texans, the friends and families of transgender Texans, faith leaders, and scores and scores of others in urging you to reject Senate Bill 3 and Senate Bill 91.

In June, the Professional Convention Management Association said their 2019 Convening Leaders meeting, scheduled for Houston, would need to be moved because of the mere ongoing discussion of implementing a bathroom bill. The event was predicted to bring \$11 million into the local economy. These bills were causing a negative economic impact on the City and the State before they were even introduced in the Legislature.

These bills do not address a single problem Texans actually face. They add to the problems of many. These bills harm transgender Texans, who only seek to live their lives in peace. They especially harm transgender children, who experience bullying from their peers and are now experiencing it from their elected leaders. They harm the convention and tourism industry, who will lose significant business. They harm Texas cities, when national and international businesses decide to locate new facilities and operations in states that send a more welcoming message. They harm all Texans, who lose the opportunity to thrive off these economic opportunities.

Moreover, the City of Houston does not need the State of Texas telling us how to regulate our restrooms. We have not experienced the issues this bill purports to address. If we did, we have sufficient ability under both state law and city ordinances to address them.

This letter marks the third time in 2017 I have written to members of the Texas Legislature regarding some sort of “bathroom bill.” The Legislature has an important job, and the State is poorly served by the Legislature continuing to attempt to follow in the footsteps of North Carolina. Please reject Senate Bill 3 and Senate Bill 91.

Sincerely,

Sylvester Turner
Mayor, City of Houston