



CITY OF HOUSTON

Sylvester Turner

Mayor

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July 21, 2017

The Honorable Kelly Hancock, Chair, the Honorable Brandon Creighton, Vice Chair, and the Honorable Members of the Texas Senate Committee on Business and Commerce:

I appreciate the opportunity to share with you the City of Houston's concerns regarding SB 13 by Senator Burton. This bill would significantly impact the current policies and regulations in place at the City of Houston's Building and Development Services department, and could have a potentially adverse impact on operations. The shortened time limit on permit applications, in addition to the new requirements for denying permit applications, would require new regulations to ensure adherence to the amended bill.

Language that stipulates a permit application will be considered approved if the municipality fails to issue an approval or denial in the time allotted by the newly added sections is detrimental to the public's interest. Any action which removes or negates a governmental entity's authority to ensure a project is code compliant places the public health and welfare at risk.

The City of Houston strives to review all applications in a timely manner. This legislation assumes applicants are prompt and correct in the information they provide to the City, but delays are often associated with incomplete or faulty information. Additionally, the time limits provided in this legislation do not appear to account for the time the plans are in the possession of the applicant(s) to complete deficiency corrections. The City works in a cooperative fashion with applicants to complete the review.

The City is also concerned with language in Section 3 that amends the definition of permit adding "including engaging in an occupation". The ability to conduct proper vetting of persons requesting permits for "engaging in occupations" would be significantly impacted by the proposed deadlines to the public's detriment.

Houston is proud to be a city that attracts continued growth and development. I respectfully request that you vote against this bill.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Sylvester Turner", is written over a horizontal line.

Sylvester Turner
Mayor, City of Houston