



# CITY OF HOUSTON

**Sylvester Turner**

Mayor

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July 21, 2017

The Honorable Members of the Texas Senate Committee on Business and Commerce:

I write to you to express my concerns with SB 14, by Senator Hall, which would prohibit a municipality, county or other political subdivision from enacting or enforcing any ordinance, rule, or other regulation that restricts a property owner's ability to remove a tree or vegetation on the owner's property, including a regulation that requires the owner to file an affidavit or notice before removing the tree or vegetation. The bill would also prohibit a property owners' association from including or enforcing deed restrictions that restrict a property owner's ability to remove a tree or vegetation on the owner's property.

This legislation would invalidate city ordinances that regulate removal of "Protected Trees" and vegetation on private property, including "Corridor Trees" located within the setback that are over 20" in caliper, or over 15" if in a "Green Corridor", "Designated Trees"; and to some extent, "Parkway (right of way) Trees".

Local government ordinances and property owner association rules are in place to benefit our mutual citizens. Among the key benefits of having reasonable rules in place are:

- Reduction of storm-water runoff and mitigation of flooding;
- Improvement of storm-water quality by stabilizing soil;
- Provision of shade for buildings and reduction of electricity consumption;
- Improvement of air quality, particularly in regions in the state that are considered to be non-attainment areas;
- Mitigation of stagnant water, a known breeding place for mosquitoes and disease; and
- Increase in property values and aesthetics.

Every city has unique issues to be considered in addressing the safety and welfare of our communities and should be empowered to enact appropriate controls. Please vote against SB 14 as it will have a negative impact on the quality of life for our citizens. Thank you for your consideration on this important item.

Sincerely,

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

Sylvester Turner  
Mayor