



CITY OF HOUSTON

Sylvester Turner

Mayor

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April 21, 2021

The Honorable Jeff Leach
Chairman, House Committee on Judiciary & Civil Jurisprudence
P.O. Box 2910
Austin, TX 78768

Re: Senate Bill 30

Dear Chairman Leach and Members of the Committee,

As America moves inexorably to a more diverse future, we are sometimes confronted with jarring anachronisms that serve to remind us just how blatant and acceptable racism was not long ago. While these sobering reminders of our repellant past should not be erased from our history, neither should they be enshrined in contemporary legal documents that serve to offend, confuse and inhibit progress.

We all know that explicit restrictions were once placed on people of color from residing in certain neighborhoods. These racist restrictions were long ago deemed unconstitutional by the U.S. Supreme Court, but the language continues to live on in otherwise legally enforceable documents. Senate Bill 30 addresses this aberration by enabling the removal of discriminatory language contained in certain restrictive covenants and real property conveyances.

This bill allows a property owner to request the county clerk to remove such language from any recorded instrument. If the county clerk determines that the recorded instrument contains the prohibited language, the county clerk must remove the restriction or provision from the recorded instrument and attach a document stating the reason for the removal.

SB 30 moves us forward from our Jim Crow past and will help move Texas deed restrictions into the 21st century. On behalf to Mayor Turner, the City of Houston fully supports the legislation and urge passage out of committee.

Sincerely,

Bill Kelly
Director of Government Relations