CITY OF HOUSTON

Sylvester Turner
Mayor

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March 5, 2019

The Honorable Lyle Larson, Chairman
House Committee on Natural Resources
Texas House of Representatives
P.O. Box 2910
Austin, Texas 78768

Dear Chairman Larson,

On behalf of the City of Houston and Mayor Sylvester Turner, please accept this letter of support for House Bill 478 and House Joint Resolution 81, which will create a flood infrastructure fund to assist local municipal governments throughout the State of Texas. These bills will assist in the financing of drainage, flood mitigation and flood control projects.

In the aftermath of Hurricane Harvey, the City of Houston faces numerous financial challenges as we recover from the disaster. Several federal programs designed to assist in the recovery effort, specifically, FEMA's Public Assistance (406) and Hazard Mitigation Grant (404) programs require a local match.

Without State assistance, many affected communities may elect to forgo federal funds due to financial constraints. A statewide grant program will enable impacted communities to leverage federal dollars 9 to 1 for Public Assistance, and 3 to 1 for Hazard Mitigation Grant programs.

In 2013, the legislature passed, and voters subsequently approved the State Water Implementation Fund for Texas (SWIFT). This program is a state-wide program for water and wastewater projects. It is structured to provide affordable, ongoing financial assistance to communities in the development and implementation of water and wastewater projects at cost-effective rates to the consumer. The creation of a similar financial program for drainage, flood mitigation and flood control projects is long overdue. The City of Houston applauds this effort and urges legislators to pass this vital measure.

Council Members: Brenda Stardig Jerry Davis Ellen R. Cohen Dwight A. Boykins Dave Martin Steve Le Greg Travis Karla Cisneros
Robert Gallegos Mike Laster Martha Castex-Tatum Mike Knox David W. Robinson Michael Kubosh Amanda Edwards Jack Christie
Controller: Chris Brown

Thank you again for the opportunity to support HB 478 & HJR 81 on behalf of over 2.2 million Houstonians still recovering from Harvey. These bills will have a direct impact in protecting lives and property from future storms.

Sincerely,

Stephen Costello, P.E.
Chief Recovery Officer