



CITY OF HOUSTON

Sylvester Turner

Mayor

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December 14, 2017

The Honorable Greg Abbott
Governor of Texas
State Capitol
P.O. Box 12428
Austin, Texas 78711

Dear Governor Abbott:

Hurricane Harvey (DR-4332-TX) inundated America's 4th largest city with over 50 inches of rain and flooded more than 300,000 housing units in Houston alone. More homes flooded in Houston during Hurricane Harvey than in New Orleans during Hurricane Katrina or New York City during Hurricane Sandy. This is also the third year in a row that Houston has experienced severe flooding resulting in a Presidentially declared disaster.

However, as much as the storm contributed to major flooding in the area, there were man made decisions that lead to flooding. For example, the decision to release water from Lake Houston via the Lake Conroe Dam was made by the San Jacinto River Authority.

- In the impacted area of Kingwood, over 7,000 homes and 400 businesses were affected. The debris removed from the area was approximately 50,000 tons. Over 80% of the homes were without flood insurance.

Clearly, there is a need to invest in flood mitigation infrastructure to protect these vulnerable neighborhoods. Additionally, there is a need to address the diversity of the San Jacinto River Authority's board membership by including appointees from areas impacted by their decisions in downstream areas.

While government officials cannot stop the rains from falling, we can and we must do all we can to make sure that both our decisions are as well informed as possible. Failing to learn from the lessons of Harvey will doom the region into making the same mistakes that have cost so many their homes.

As Mayor of the City of Houston, it is my hope that the Governor and the Legislature address the needed infrastructure and governance changes to insure residents are properly protected. My office stands ready to assist in these matters for the good of the people of Houston.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Sylvester Turner". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "S" and "T".

Sylvester Turner
Mayor

cc: The Honorable Dan Patrick, Lt. Governor
The Honorable Joe Straus III, Speaker of the House
The Honorable Dan Huberty, State Representative