



CHARLES SCHWERTNER

STATE SENATOR • DISTRICT 5

COMMITTEES: ADMINISTRATION, CHAIR • BUSINESS AND COMMERCE • EDUCATION • FINANCE • STATE AFFAIRS

February 4, 2021

Mayor Steve Adler
P.O. Box 1088
Austin, TX 78767-1088

Dear Mayor Adler,

I write today to express my strong opposition to the Austin City Council's proposal to purchase a hotel in Williamson County for the purpose of relocating homeless individuals from other parts of Austin. I also write to lend my support to the request by the Williamson County Commissioners Court to suspend this plan for 180 days to allow time for the appropriate impact studies to be conducted.

In response to the troubling lack of candor and communication from the City of Austin, I have drafted several pieces of legislation for consideration during this legislative session. These legislative proposals include a bill that would require advance notice and approval by a county commissioners court before a city is permitted to develop new housing projects to serve those experiencing homelessness. Among other requirements, the legislation would require coordination between cities and counties to ensure that appropriate resources such as healthcare, public transportation, mental health services, security, and job training programs are available for the individuals being served.

Before further action is taken, there needs to be open and transparent dialog between the elected leaders of the City of Austin and Williamson County to understand how the City intends to provide the necessary resources to support these individuals experiencing homelessness, including: access to healthcare, public transportation, mental health services, job training programs, and security. Failure to appropriately develop a coordinated plan to provide these services would represent a serious disservice to the homeless individuals who would be relocated. In addition, the business owners and residents who live nearby would also be seriously affected by this decision.

As the State Senator for Williamson County, I consider it my duty to speak up for the constituents who will be negatively impacted by this hasty and ill-considered proposal. In the strongest possible terms, I would respectfully encourage you and the council to delay this decision, and commit to working collaboratively with the county before proceeding further.

Sincerely,

Charles Schwertner
State Senator

CC: Members of the Austin City Council
Members of the Williamson County Commissioners Court

BRYAN OFFICE:
3000 BRIARCREST DRIVE, SUITE 202
BRYAN, TEXAS 77802
(979) 776-0222 • FAX: (979) 776-0220

CAPITOL OFFICE:
3E.10 • P.O. Box 12068 • AUSTIN, TEXAS 78711
(512) 463-0105 • FAX: (512) 463-5713
charles.schwertner@senate.texas.gov

GEORGETOWN OFFICE:
117 W. 7th St. #5
GEORGETOWN, TEXAS 78626
(512) 863-8456