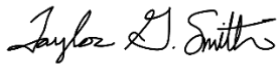




**TO:** Mayor Kirk Watson and Austin City Council Members  
**FROM:** Taylor G. Smith, Deputy Director of Government Affairs   
**DATE:** March 24, 2026  
**SUBJECT:** Item 42 – Resolution Establishing the Strong Local Commerce (SLC) Initiative and Front Yard Business Program

Mayor Watson and Council Members,

The Austin Board of REALTORS® (ABoR) is encouraged by the Austin City Council's efforts to expand economic opportunity for Austin residents through the proposed Strong Local Commerce (SLC) Initiative. On behalf of the more than 16,000 Central Texas REALTORS® we represent, we support the intent of Item 42. By removing commercial rent as a barrier to entry, Front Yard Businesses give everyday Austinites the opportunity to build wealth and explore entrepreneurial ventures without taking on the risk and expense of commercial space. The resolution's by-right administrative approval structure also reflects the kind of permitting reform ABoR has consistently championed.

We look forward to City staff engaging with residents, property owners, and neighborhoods to identify the areas most eager for this type of initiative, ensuring overlay locations reflect genuine community interest before any citywide expansion is considered.

ABoR is excited about the direction this resolution represents and looks forward to participating in the stakeholder engagement process as overlay criteria, permitting standards, and code amendments are developed. Thank you for your leadership, and we are ready to be a partner as this work moves forward.

Cc: T.C. Broadnax, City Manager