



COMMISSION RECOMMENDATION

Human Rights Commission

Recommendation Number 20260323-006: Budget Proposal for Increased Emergency Housing Assistance

WHEREAS, the City of Austin is still facing a housing affordability crisis as data reports show that the overall median rent is now \$1,624.00, with the median rent for a one bedroom at \$1,405.00. Both of these figures, though a decrease from previous years and a trend in the right direction, are the second highest for any city in the state of Texas.

WHEREAS, even though median rent has fallen in the past year, rental prices are still unsustainable; especially given that the cost of living for Austinites has continued to vastly increase due to national trends such as soaring healthcare costs, grocery bills, increases at the gas pump, and child and dependent care.

WHEREAS, Eviction filings in Austin JP Courts reached a record high of 15,253 filings in a single year in 2025, an increase of 13% from 2024, and the State Legislature codified a bill in the last legislative session that has already weakened what little rights tenants already possess in the state of Texas.

WHEREAS, per the Eviction Lab at Princeton University, eviction filings in Austin have soared to over 32% higher than the pre-pandemic average rate, with communities of color drastically more at risk of eviction in a state with some of the country's weakest protections for renters.

WHEREAS, a record 2.1 million renters, more than half of the state's renter households, are "cost burdened," meaning they spend more than 30% of their income on rent and utilities per a recent Harvard University study.

WHEREAS, the State of Texas shuttered its statewide rent relief program in the summer of 2023 leaving it up to municipalities to act on the growing rental crisis. Austin has stepped up to the plate, most recently in last year's budget cycle with a renewal of the \$8 million rental assistance and eviction support program through the City of Austin Housing Department's "I Belong in Austin" program.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Human Rights Commission encourages the Austin City Council to allocate at least another \$8 million dollars in rental relief funds and explore all available means in order to create short, medium, and long term solutions for individuals at risk of

eviction in Austin.

Date of Approval: March 23, 2026

Motioned By: Vice Chair Zeidan

Seconded By: Commissioner Morgan Avitia

Vote: 8-0

For: Chair Duhon, Vice Chair Zeidan, Commissioners Aslam, Davis, Kirsh Pozen, Krueger, Morgan Avitia, Oliva-Martínez

Against: None

Abstain: None

Recuse: None

Off the dais: None

Absent: Commissioners Igram, Khawar

Attest: *Ryan Sperling*

(Ryan Sperling, Staff Liaison)