



SENATOR PAUL BETTENCOURT  
DISTRICT 7

COMMITTEES:  
INTERGOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS — VICE-CHAIR

EDUCATION  
FINANCE  
HIGHER EDUCATION

August 19, 2015

TO: Lieutenant Governor Dan Patrick

FROM: Senator Paul Bettencourt

CC: Chairman Eddie Lucio, Jr. Chair of Intergovernmental Relations Committee

For the fourth time in the past three months, courts have overruled actions taken by the City of Houston relating to petitions for voter referendums; three of those times were by the Texas Supreme Court. The most recent Texas Supreme Court ruling demonstrates that, yet again, certain individuals working for the City of Houston intend to ignore both the city charter and state law. This has resulted in City of Houston taxpayers spending their own money to force the City to follow the law.

Consequently, I am formally requesting that the Senate Committee on Intergovernmental Relations be given a charge to examine the practices of the City of Houston and other home rule cities in their handling of petitions for voter referendums. It has been reported that Houston is not the only city in Texas that is willingly circumventing the law to achieve its own desired results.

It is my intention that the end result of these hearings will be proposals for legislation that will provide clearer statutory guidance for all cities and municipalities to follow and provide statutory penalties for willful defiance of the law.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Paul Bettencourt".

Senator Paul Bettencourt

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