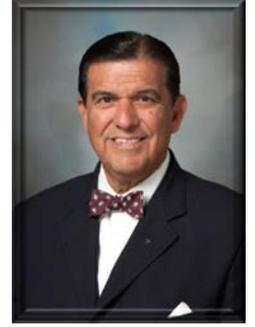




**STATE SENATOR
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PRESS RELEASE: \$11.3 Million in Critical Housing Assistance Available
Much needed rental assistance for Texans facing severe economic hardship due to COVID-19

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

Thursday, April 30, 2020

Contact: Daniel Esparza, IGR Committee Director
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AUSTIN, TX – Senator Eddie Lucio, Jr., (D-Brownsville) applauds the efforts of Texas Governor Greg Abbott and the Texas Department of Housing and Community Affairs (TDHCA) for successfully acquiring the necessary federal waivers to allow the state to help Texans struggling with housing due to COVID-19 with much-needed rental assistance. The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) finally approved a series of waivers Texas first submitted on April 1, which together provide the state the needed authority and flexibility to use some of its funds to assist family and individual tenants who have suffered loss of income due to the spread of COVID-19. Up to \$11.3 million will be made available to help Texans facing housing challenges with up to 100 percent of the cost of rent, security deposit payments, and utility bills.

"In a time when many of our constituents are facing dire economic hardships, Texas has finally received the necessary flexibility by our federal counterparts in HUD to help families and tenants struggling with housing due to the COVID-19 pandemic," said Sen. Lucio. "I am so thankful to HUD for approving these housing waivers which provide Texas the needed authority to help our constituents in need of housing."

Sen. Lucio, chair of the Texas Senate Committee on Intergovernmental Relations (IGR), which has standing jurisdiction over housing, applauded the efforts of the governor's office and TDHCA. "This is another great example of how our state and agency leaders are working together with the federal government to help our constituents overcome the severe hardships brought upon by the spread of COVID-19," said Sen. Lucio. "As Chairman of IGR, I commend Governor Abbott, TDHCA and its board for continuing to find ways to maximize resources and provide much-needed financial help to our constituents struggling through this public health crisis."

Funds will be provided by HOME Tenant Based Rental Assistance (TBRA) and will be available to current TBRA administrators in the weeks to come who will then distribute the aid to qualifying Texans.

"I strongly urge families and individuals who are facing economic hardship and struggling with housing to visit TDHCA's *Help for Texans* webpage, <https://www.tdhca.state.tx.us/texans.htm>. There you can find help by searching for local rental assistance providers by clicking 'Long Term Rent Payment Help' and entering your respective city or county, and by clicking on the 'Find Help Button'," concluded IGR Chairman Lucio.

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Senator Eddie Lucio, Jr. (D – Brownsville) represents Cameron, Hidalgo, Kenedy, Kleberg, and Willacy Counties. He is the Chairman of the Senate Committee on Intergovernmental Relations; Vice Chairman of the Senate Committee on Education; Member of the Senate Committees on State Affairs; Veteran Affairs & Border Security; and of the Select Committees on Redistricting; and, Texas Ports. He is member of the Sunset Advisory Commission and has been an ex-officio member of the DSHS Task Force of Border Public Health Officials since 2017. Elected in 1991, Lucio is third in seniority in the Texas Senate.