



GOVERNOR GREG ABBOTT

April 13, 2026

The Honorable John Whitmire
Mayor
City of Houston
P.O. Box 1562
Houston, TX 77251

Dear Mayor Whitmire:

The Public Safety Office of the Office of the Governor ("PSO") has become aware that, on April 8, 2026, the Houston City Council voted to add Section 34-41 to Houston's Code of Ordinances. That new ordinance provides that the Houston Police Department ("HPD") cannot cooperate with U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement in certain respects. Specifically, Section 34-41 states that members of HPD cannot initiate or continue detention of illegal aliens pursuant to an ICE administrative warrant.

On April 14, 2025, you executed a certification on behalf of the City of Houston ("the City") as a condition for receiving any grants from PSO. You certified that the City and HPD would "participate fully... in all aspects of the programs and procedures utilized by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security . . . to (1) notify DHS of all information requested by DHS related to illegal aliens in [HPD's] custody; and (2) detain such illegal aliens in accordance with requests by DHS." You also certified that the City and HPD "do not have, and will continue not to have any policy, procedure, or agreement that in any way limits or impedes" HPD's receipt or DHS's issuance of detainer requests, or in any way limits or restricts the City's or HPD's "full participation in all aspects of the programs and procedures utilized by DHS to: (1) notify DHS of all information requested by DHS related to illegal aliens in [HPD's] custody; and (2) detain such illegal aliens in accordance with requests by DHS."

You further acknowledged that if the City failed to comply with these certifications at any time during the certification period: PSO could terminate "any grant made by [the Office of the Governor] to" the City; the City must "return all funds received from" PSO that relate to the certifications; and the City would become ineligible for new PSO grant funding until the City demonstrates compliance with your certification for at least one year. By prohibiting HPD from acting on an administrative warrant issued by a component of DHS that directs the detention of an alien, Section 34-41 impedes notification of DHS regarding aliens in HPD's custody and the detention of such aliens.

This letter serves to notify you that this new ordinance, Section 34-41 of the Houston Code of Ordinances, is in breach of your April 15, 2025, certification and imperils all grant agreements between the City and PSO for Fiscal Year 2026. Please respond by April 20, 2026, to confirm that the City will not enforce, and will act to repeal, the ordinance. Failure to do so may result in PSO exercising its sole discretion terminate all such grants.

Our records indicate that the City has received roughly \$110 million in PSO grants in Fiscal Year 2026. If PSO elects to terminate those grants, the City would be required to repay to PSO the entire amount on or before the 30th day after PSO terminates. Please send any correspondence to andrew.friedrichs@gov.texas.gov.

Sincerely,

Andrew Friedrichs

Andrew Friedrichs
Public Safety Office
Executive Director

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