



Opposition to HB 274 and HJR 86

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Chair and Members,

Every Texan stands in strong opposition to HB 274 and HJR 86, which seek to strip the City of Austin—and nearly one million residents—of the local autonomy and democratic governance afforded to every other municipality in Texas. This legislation is not just an overreach; it is an affront to the fundamental principles of representative government and local self-determination.

By imposing state legislative oversight over Austin’s municipal affairs, this bill undermines the authority of locally elected officials chosen by the people of Austin to address the city’s unique challenges. Local governments exist precisely because they are best positioned to respond swiftly and effectively to the needs of their communities. Removing this authority not only erodes the city’s ability to govern but also sets a dangerous precedent that could destabilize local control across the state.

Further, HB 274 and HJR 86 violate the core tenets of democracy by disenfranchising Austinites and depriving them of a government that is accountable to their needs and priorities. This legislation forces state intervention where it is neither warranted nor welcome, replacing local decision-making with a broad, detached legislative agenda that does not reflect the lived experiences of those in the community.

The consequences of this overreach extend beyond Austin. Allowing the state to seize control of municipal governance threatens the liberties of all Texans by concentrating power at the state level and silencing local voices. When those closest to a community are denied the ability to govern, every Texan suffers.

Moreover, the chilling effect of this legislation is alarming. It signals to municipalities across Texas that their ability to govern effectively is contingent on the approval of the legislature—a tactic more befitting authoritarian regimes than a free and representative democracy.

Every Texan deserves a government that listens, represents, and acts in their best interests. HB 274 and HJR 86 would do the opposite. Every Texan urges you to reject these measures and stand in defense of democracy, local governance, and the rights of all Texans to have a say in how their communities are run.

We urge you to vote no on HB 274 and HJR 86. .