



HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
AUSTIN

August 21, 2023

To: Texas City Councils, County Commissions, and Local Officials

During the 2019 Legislative Session, a bill was passed (Senate Bill 22) which prohibited tax dollars from funding abortion providers and their affiliates at the state and local level and included an amendment specifically clarifying that the bill does not prohibit cities and counties from banning abortion. Taking their cue from this amendment, on June 11, 2019, the City Council of Waskom, Texas, passed an ordinance banning all abortions within their city limits and prohibiting any abortion provider from doing business within the town's jurisdiction.

During the 2021 Legislative Session, the Texas Legislature made it even more clear that cities and counties could pass ordinances outlawing abortion when they passed Senate Bill 8 - also known as the Texas Heartbeat Act. This bill prohibited an abortion being performed on any child which is found to have a detectable heartbeat, but also included a section addressing the authority cities and counties have at prohibiting abortion in their jurisdiction. The law states in Texas Government Code § 311.036(b), "A statute may not be construed to restrict a political subdivision from regulating or prohibiting abortion in a manner that is at least as stringent as the laws of this state unless the statute explicitly states that political subdivisions are prohibited from regulating or prohibiting abortion in the manner described by the statute."

Currently there are over 50 political subdivisions in Texas which have passed local ordinances prohibiting abortion within their jurisdictions. As elected officials who voted for state legislation allowing these local actions, we are thrilled to see this wave of pro-life action at the local level and hope to see these ordinances continue to spread across our state – *even in a post-Roe Texas*. While it is true that abortion is outlawed in the entire State of Texas, from the point of conception, our work is far from over. Right now, throughout the State of Texas, women are being trafficked across our borders by abortion traffickers funded by abortion trafficking organizations still operating in our state. As a result, these women are being abused and traumatized by abortion across our Texas–New Mexico border and sent back to Texas for our cities and counties to deal with the aftermath taking place in our homes, our schools, our churches, and our hospitals. The Sanctuary for the Unborn ordinances seek to protect these institutions by putting safeguards in place to protect men, women, and their children for years to come. These ordinances, which seek to close as many loopholes as possible, do not penalize women who seek or undergo abortions, but places the penalty on the party who most deserves it -- the abortionist and the industry profiting from the unjust procedure, *including abortion traffickers*.

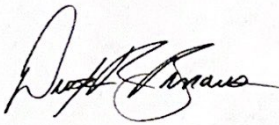
While we intend to do our part to keep our strong pro-life protections for mothers and their unborn children, we believe it will help for cities and counties to do their part as well. As state elected officials who are trusted by Pro-Life Texans to stand for life at every available opportunity, we believe this is a viable

and crucial opportunity for local governments to protect their most vulnerable members. We look forward to partnering with you as we seek to defend innocent human life at every level of government.

Therefore, we, the undersigned, respectfully encourage local government officials to do their part in the passage of ordinances outlawing abortion and abortion trafficking and declaring their cities and counties *Sanctuaries for the Unborn*.

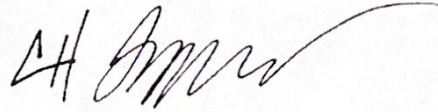
Thank you for your consideration.

Signed,



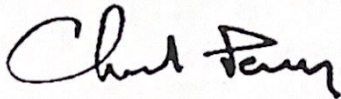
Dustin Burrows

State Representative, House District 83



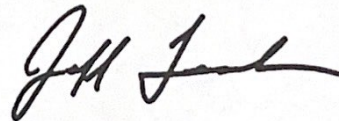
Carl Tepper

State Representative, House District 84



Charles Perry

State Senator, Senate District 28



Jeff Leach

State Representative, House District 67



Briscoe Cain

State Representative, House District 128



Jared Patterson

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James Frank

James Frank

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Cole Hefner

Cole Hefner

State Representative, House District 5

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State Representative, House District 91

Ellen Troxclair

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State Representative, House District 19

Mayes Middleton

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State Senator, Senate District 11