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HOUSE BILL 2018

April 19, 2023

Thank you, Chairman Burns, for the opportunity to present information related to House Bill 2018 and for your work on behalf of the Great State of Texas. My name is **Carissa Cox**, and I am here to testify on behalf of the American Planning Association - Texas Chapter (APA Texas) in **opposition to House Bill 2018 as written**. APA Texas is an association of over 2,500 private and public sector planners that manage growth and plan for development in Texas.

We feel that the bill is overly broad, does not take into consideration the complexities of the development process, and will result in LONGER timeframes for project approvals and faulty infrastructure systems that will make our communities unsafe. We find the following problems with this bill:

- Most development documents listed are essential to life, health and safety including drainage, flooding, roadway, traffic safety, water and wastewater. Who carries the liability when someone dies, or someone's house floods?
- Most engineering and construction design documents are for improvements that are dedicated to the public for ownership and maintenance. Will taxpayers accept substandard public improvements for long term maintenance? Will the developer be unable to dedicate such improvements?
- Some steps in the approval process are beyond the control of the political jurisdiction, such as TCEQ and TXDOT approvals/permits. Additionally, approvals subject to conditions, such as a FEMA "Letter of Map Revision" will not work because the "LOMR" can completely change the plat, lot layout and engineering design.
- The applicant can request only one extension to the shot clock, forcing political jurisdictions to deny many land development applications.
- TML, APA-Texas and the Texas Homebuilders worked with legislators to develop a substitute bill in both House and Senate that have been received favorably, and that provide more comprehensive reform. This bill conflicts with the bill we favor.

APA Texas works closely with the people who are designing, regulating and developing projects all over our state. Land use and development are our core areas of expertise.

Respectfully submitted,

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Carissa Cox, AICP, American Planning Association - Texas Chapter