



TEXAS HOUSE *of* REPRESENTATIVES

November 23, 2020

Emily W. Murphy
Administrator
General Services Administration
1800 F Street NW
Washington, DC 20405

Dear Ms. Murphy:

We, Members of the Democratic Caucus in the Texas House of Representatives, write to express our strongest objection to your refusal to comply with the Presidential Transition Act and ascertain President-Elect Joe Biden as the winner of the November 3 general election and the next President of the United States. We urge you to take immediate, corrective action so that the American people may witness the seamless transition of power that is the solemn hallmark of our country's democratic institutions.

The delays in acknowledging President-elect Biden and Vice President-elect Kamala Harris as the winners, thereby stonewalling their ability to begin the transition process, are actively harming Texans across our state. Most directly, this inexcusable action is stalling the long overdue planning and preparation for the administration to work with our state to confront and contain the spread of COVID-19.

Dr. Anthony Fauci recently warned that delays in the transition and his inability to speak to Biden-Harris transition officials will slow the rollout of any national COVID-19 vaccination program. Every additional day you refuse to acknowledge Joe Biden as the President-elect is another day where thousands of Americans, including many Texans, will remain at an unnecessarily heightened risk of illness or death from COVID-19. Conversations about supply chains, PPE distribution, and vaccine manufacturing and distribution should be seamless and unencumbered by partisan politics.

Historically, those conversations would already be well underway. Those of us serving in office in 2008-09 remember the Obama/Biden transition and how the early work on the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 informed our actions on the state level and, ultimately, forestalled harmful budget cuts to our state's public education and health care agencies. Incidentally, President Obama has repeatedly recognized the professional and seamless transition overseen by President Bush as tremendously beneficial to his administration and the nation.

Contrast then with now. In Texas, our state budget is the only legislation we are constitutionally required to pass. Yet while our budget writing process is well underway, we are left operating in the dark with respect to potential federal government actions. We need information about the country's future plans for COVID-19 containment – including any national infrastructure or stimulus efforts for taxpayers and small businesses. There is absolutely no reason for you to continue impeding those conversations.

Beyond the health and economic planning for COVID-19, there are any number of matters of national security, foreign policy, and immigration questions that deserve immediate attention and action. A delayed transition may only further prolong the tragic separation of more than 600 children from their parents at the southern border. The incoming administration has committed to forming a task force to reunify these children with their families, but that work will be impeded without receiving critical information during the transition.

On this and countless other matters, your delayed ascertainment is jeopardizing the health and safety of Texas individuals, families and businesses. It is entirely unreasonable for you to refuse to recognize every historical precedent of execution of the Presidential Transition Act.

There is no doubt that President-elect Biden, in addition to winning nearly 80 million popular votes, will win the required electoral college votes and serve as our next President – just as there is no doubt that the frivolous lawsuits challenging the election outcomes are a dangerous waste of time, as they serve no other purpose than to further erode confidence in our institutions of democracy. The American people have chosen Joe Biden and Kamala Harris to be the next President and Vice President of the United States.

Your unlawful decision not to ascertain President-elect Biden and Vice President-elect Harris violates the Presidential Transition Act and inflicts direct harm upon the people we represent.

We strongly implore you, in the clearest of terms, to end this charade immediately.

Sincerely,



Rep. Chris Turner
Chair, Texas House Democratic Caucus



Rep. Celia Israel
1st Vice-Chair, Texas HDC



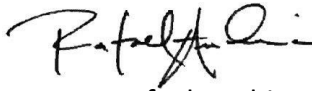
Rep. Toni Rose
2nd Vice-Chair, Texas HDC



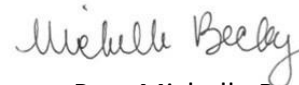
Rep. Oscar Longoria
Treasurer, Texas HDC



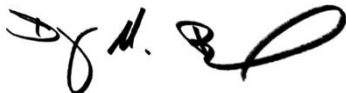
Rep. Alma Allen



Rep. Rafael Anchia



Rep. Michelle Beckley



Rep. Diego Bernal



Rep. Lorraine Birabil



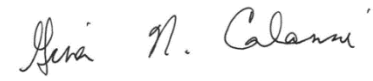
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Rep.-elect Liz Campos



Rep. Terry Canales



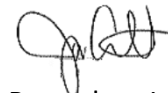
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Rep. Joe Deshotel



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Rep. Barbara Gervin-Hawkins



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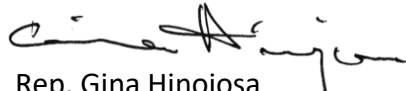
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Rep. Donna Howard



Rep.-elect Ann Johnson



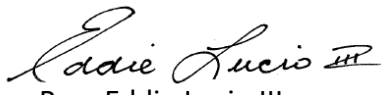
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Rep. Julie Johnson



Rep. Ray Lopez



Rep. Eddie Lucio III



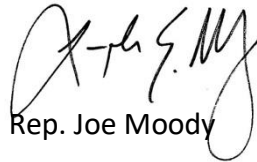
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Rep. Terry Meza



Rep. Ina Minjarez



Rep. Joe Moody

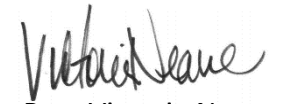


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Rep.-elect Eddie Morales



Rep. Sergio Muñoz, Jr.




Rep. Victoria Neave



Rep. Poncho Nevarez



Rep.-elect Claudia Ordaz Perez



Rep. Evelina "Lina" Ortega



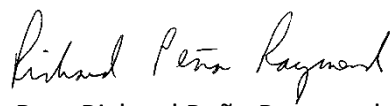
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Rep. Jon Rosenthal

Rep.-elect Penny Morales Shaw



Rep. Carl Sherman



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Rep. Shawn Thierry



Rep. Senfronia Thompson



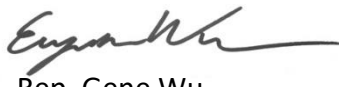
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