



## MEMORANDUM

**TO:** Mayor & Council Members  
**FROM:** Joya Hayes, Assistant Director, Human Resources  
**DATE:** April 21, 2015  
**SUBJECT:** 2015 Fair Housing Conference Changes

The purpose of this memorandum is to make you aware of recent concerns expressed to some Council offices and City staff regarding the May 8<sup>th</sup> Fair Housing Conference. These concerns have focused on the conference's scheduled luncheon speaker, Mr. David Mintz.

### Background Information

The Fair Housing Conference is sponsored by the Equal Employment Fair Housing Office of the Human Resources Department and is designed to provide training to support compliance with fair housing laws. Attendees have traditionally included compliance/enforcement staff, housing program administrators, attorneys, professional property managers, and tenant advocacy organizations. The conference agendas have always included a variety of subjects, presenters and fair housing topics to aid professionals who are subject to fair housing regulations.

This year marks the 25th anniversary of the Texas Fair Housing Act. In celebration of this milestone, conference planners sought to honor the work that contributed to this legislation. A key figure in the passing of this legislation was David Mintz, who at that time worked as an aide in the Texas Legislature. In the summer of 2014, prior to the passing of the City's Source of Income Ordinance, City staff invited Mr. Mintz to speak at the 2015 Fair Housing Conference about his experiences in getting the Texas Fair Housing Act passed.

### Recent Concerns

City staff has received complaints from three community groups in opposition to Mr. Mintz speaking at this event based on his current role as Vice President of Government Affairs for the Texas Apartment Association (TAA). The Austin Apartment Association, a subsidiary of the TAA, has voiced opposition to the City's Source of Income ordinance approved by Council in October 2014. Staff's request for Mr. Mintz's participation was not intended as a reaction to any position on the Source of Income law. Rather, the request was an inclusive way of gaining a historical perspective on the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Texas Fair Housing Act.

However, given that certain perceptions and circumstances may distract from the purpose of the conference, staff has informed Mr. Mintz about the need to have an alternative presenter. Staff is currently in the process of scheduling a replacement luncheon speaker from a State housing enforcement agency. If you have further questions, please contact me at 974-3246.

C: Marc A. Ott, City Manager  
Anthony Snipes, Assistant City Manager  
Bert Lumbreras, Assistant City Manager  
Mark Washington, Human Resources Director  
Betsy Spencer, Neighborhood Housing and Community Development Director  
Johnathon Babiak, Human Resources EEO/FH Administrator