



Office of the President

TEXAS SOUTHERN UNIVERSITY

3100 CLEBURNE ST. | HOUSTON, TEXAS 77004 | 713.313.1179

May 7, 2025

Bobby Wilkinson, Executive Director
Members of the Board
Texas Department of Housing and Community Affairs
221 East 11th Street
Austin, Texas 78711

RE: #25090; Trinity East Senior, Houston, Harris County, Texas; Appeal of Termination Due to High Part I Violent Crime Rate.

Dear Mr. Wilkinson and Members of the Board of the Texas Department of Housing and Community Affairs:

I serve as President of Texas Southern University, founded in 1927. This University has long been an anchor institution in the Third Ward and the broader Houston Community. By statute, Texas Southern University is tasked as a general-purpose institution for higher education, and also as a special-purpose institution for urban programming. Texas Southern strongly supports the granting of the appeal to allow the Trinity East Senior development to proceed. Replacement housing for the many seniors living in Cuney Homes is essential.

Texas Southern University, with an enrollment of over 8700 students, is located on a beautiful 150-acre campus directly next door to the Cuney Homes development established in 1939. For the past 86 years, this institution and the Cuney Homes have shared a unique relationship. The University engages in research and the delivery of services specifically targeted to the improvement of the Cuney Homes residents' quality of life. The transformational effect of the \$50,000,000.00 United States Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Choice Neighborhood grant, which will be leveraged with another \$400,000,000.00 investment, will have a powerful transformational uplifting effect on the entire community.

In my former capacity as a military commander, nothing was more important than the safety, health, and welfare of the personnel entrusted to my care. I conducted my business from the standpoint of – *mission first, people always!* I view this HUD Choice Neighborhood project through this lens. I support and value the focus of the Texas Department of Housing and Community Affairs on safety. Public Safety must be a paramount issue for all of us. It is for me at Texas Southern. At this University, we are actively engaged in making the campus safer for our students, faculty, and employees, and contributing, as we can, to the improvement in safety for the Third Ward community outside of our campus gates.

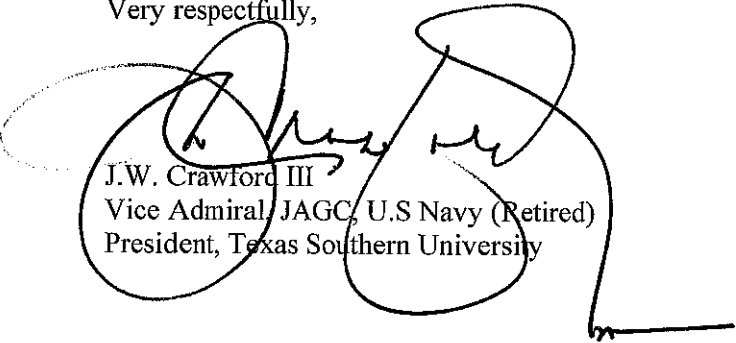
The Texas Southern University Department of Public Safety (DPS) is a robust organization of seventy-one (71), including support administrators, well-trained and certified personnel. Texas Southern University DPS is a proactive regional partner, working hand in hand with the Houston Police Department (HPD) and the University of Houston Police Department (UHPD). Our officers routinely respond to neighborhood calls, assist HPD along the Columbia Tap Trail during periods of heightened need, and collaborate in training exercises with UHPD. Texas Southern University DPS has deployed resources to support major

events, responded to calls of support, and strengthened community trust through sustained service initiatives. These integrated efforts are having a positive effect on driving safer community conditions and will only be enhanced by the HUD Choice Neighborhood grant. This massive infusion of new development will be a powerful catalyst for change and ultimately reverse long-standing patterns of undesirable behaviors in the Cuney Homes neighborhood.

Texas Southern University is thrilled with the new leadership at the Houston Housing Authority and has already begun collaborating with them to find ways to synergistically employ the resources of the proposed project. I sincerely believe the long-awaited impetus for change is currently now before us. The University is appreciative of the Texas Department of Housing and Community Affairs' commitment to the revitalization efforts in the Cuney Homes. The strategic alignment of the Texas Department of Housing and Community Affairs, the Houston Housing Authority, and Texas Southern University can establish a new and vibrant day in the Third Ward Cuney Homes neighborhood and surrounding environs.

I respectfully request the Board Members of the Texas Department of Housing and Community Affairs to approve the Trinity East Senior appeal and join with us and our Cuney Homes neighbors in elevating and transforming our historic community.

Very respectfully,



J.W. Crawford III
Vice Admiral, JAGC, U.S Navy (Retired)
President, Texas Southern University