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## **STATE REPRESENTATIVE DWAYNE BOHAC**

### **Bohac creates tough apartment inspection program** *Legislation passes Texas House and heads to Senate*

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AUSTIN, TEXAS - A bill by state Rep. Dwayne Bohac (R-Houston) to create habitability standards for apartments has passed in the Texas House of Representatives with overwhelming support and now heads to the Senate. Under House Bill 1819, the city of Houston will be required to keep the pressure on apartment owners who fail to keep tenants safe and units up to code with strict and permanent building inspections.

Bohac, who represents areas of west and northwest Houston with numerous older properties, said he decided to push the legislation after the death of Houston police officer Timothy Abernathy last December. The suspect in the shooting did not live in the complex, called Luxor Park, but Bohac believes that run-down conditions lead to increased crime.

“More than 1 million Houstonians live in apartments which, once they open for business, are never re-inspected to ensure public health and safety, and that is unacceptable to me,” Bohac said. “I have seen apartments that are literally crumbling, and that is dangerous for the residents and for the surrounding neighborhoods, as deteriorating apartments often become havens for criminal activity.”

House Bill 1819 requires the city to establish standards for foundations, stairways, balconies, walls and other load-bearing structures. The city also will be required to inspect plumbing, energy efficiency, electrical outlets and circuits, safety devices and water-heating implements. The city would be required to regularly inspect apartments for proper maintenance and operating conditions.

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“I worked very closely with the City of Houston and other stakeholders to craft this bill, which will improve the quality of life for so many people,” Bohac said. “We believe that this bill is the impetus for ensuring that apartments be built and continue to operate in a responsible manner for residents and surrounding communities.”

Mayor Bill White strongly supports Bohac's HB 1819 and Sen. Rodney Ellis (D-Houston) will carry the bill in the Senate. If the Senate approves the bill, it will head to the Governor's desk for signing.

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