



Texas Apartment Association

**Providing exceptional advocacy, education and communication
for the Texas rental housing industry.**

Support HB 1557 by Parker and SB 737 by Hancock: Transparency on Municipal Fees

Cities have the authority to establish fees for permits, licenses and services. Many cities increase existing fees, or impose new fees, through the city's budgeting process.

- ★ These fees may be used to help fund the city's budget.
- ★ In many cases, little advance notice is provided to parties who must pay those fees.

Texas law currently requires advance notice from cities regarding proposed property tax increases.

- ★ Cities seeking to increase their property taxes must include, with the proposed budget, a cover page containing specific information about the property tax increase.
- ★ The cover page must state the amount of revenue the property tax increase will generate, as well as the percentage that property taxes will increase if the rate is adopted.
- ★ Cities must publish this cover page at least 30 days before the date the city council considers adopting the budget.

This legislation provides more transparency for the public by requiring additional information on the budget cover page specifically related to new or increased fees.

- ★ Requires a city to include information on the budget cover page regarding new or increased fees for services, licenses and permits.
- ★ Requires a separate vote by the city council to approve the use of the revenue raised by the new or increased fees.
- ★ Allows interested parties to easily find relevant information, providing more time to discuss the fee increases with elected officials.

The bill also allows interested parties to register to receive information about proposed new or increased fees from the city.

- ★ This email notification system will function in a manner similar to how state agencies notify affected persons about proposed regulatory changes.
- ★ The email notification will help enable the public to keep abreast of changes in fees both during and outside of a city's normal budgeting process.

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