

TX House Bill 1257 — Local Control for Local Housing Problems



On January 31, 2019, State Representative Rosenthal filed House Bill 1257, which seeks to repeal a preemptive law passed by the state in 2015. The 2015 preemptive law sought to forbid cities and counties from passing ordinances that would protect housing choice voucher holders from landlord discrimination, ordinances that are used in several locations throughout the country. The City of Dallas discussed this issue at length in October 2016 while debating its own Source of Income Discrimination ordinance. The version of the ordinance that passed Dallas City Council in 2016 tracked the confines of the 2015 state law, which means that it protected renters from sources of income discrimination but NOT FAMILIES USING HOUSING CHOICE VOUCHERS.

It is no surprise that landlords have express concerns about how the voucher program is administered. But these issues are best dealt with at the local level. The Inclusive Communities Project supports HB 1257 and wants the state to uncuff Texas cities and counties by repealing TX Government Code 250.007 and allowing them to address their low income housing crises as they see fit.

ICP's report on the Dallas Metroplex' vast voucher discrimination problem may be found on our blog.

Background Information

Dallas

<https://www.dallasnews.com/news/dallas-city-council/2016/10/26/dallas-council-rejects-effort-require-landlords-accept-housing-vouchers>

<https://www.wfaa.com/article/news/local/verify/verify-is-there-affordable-housing-in-the-suburbs/287-460319178>

<https://www.healthaffairs.org/doi/10.1377/hblog20180816.768523/full/>

<https://medium.com/@ICPMobility/the-city-of-dallas-should-prohibit-discrimination-against-federal-housing-choice-voucher-recipients-c8c9c3f560> (Oct. 2016)

Texas

<https://www.austinchronicle.com/news/2015-09-04/not-for-rent/>

<https://www.courthousenews.com/austin-fights-texas-enforce-housing-protections/>

<https://www.bigcountryhomepage.com/news/state-news/section-8-vouchers-are-supposed-to-help-the-poor-reach-better-neighborhoods-law-gets-in-the-way/1606875229>

<https://www.houstonchronicle.com/news/houston-texas/houston/article/Hunting-for-a-home-6617602.php>

National

<https://www.huduser.gov/portal//portal/sites/default/files/pdf/ExecSumm-Landlord->