



# NEWS

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Contact: Gordon Anderson/512.475.4743  
Jorge Reyes/512.475.4577

**NOTE TO EDITOR:** Photos and copies of the resolution, Governor Perry's Fair Housing Month Proclamation, certificate presented to Commissioner Williams and a bonus list of "Fast Facts and Contacts" are available online at <http://www.tdhca.state.tx.us/ppa/media/>.

## **State Housing Agency Asks People to Join its Commitment to Fair Housing for Texans**

(AUSTIN) – The Governing Board of the Texas Department of Housing and Community Affairs today unanimously adopted a resolution asserting that housing discrimination would not be allowed on any programs under their control and requested that their affordable housing building partners commit to the same. On hand as a witness and advocate for the proposal was Texas Rail Road Commissioner Michael Williams.

The resolution called for strong enforcement for fair housing practices in the administration of TDHCA's programs, services and activities. The board also acknowledged Governor Perry's Fair Housing Month proclamation and recognized Commissioner Williams for his role in fair housing activities following hurricanes Katrina and Rita. The moves marked the board and the Department's commemoration of the 39th Anniversary of the Fair Housing Act.

"All Texans deserve equal access to housing," said Michael Gerber, TDHCA Executive Director. "TDHCA takes the responsibility of ensuring and enforcing fair housing seriously. On the occasion of Fair Housing Month, we rededicate ourselves to expanding housing opportunities for every Texan including low-income Texans."

In his proclamation, Governor Perry called on Texans to remain committed to advancing fair housing opportunities for all citizens and officially proclaimed April 2007 "Fair Housing Month" in Texas.

"These acts were conceived with a noble goal in mind – to afford all Americans the opportunity to seek housing without fear of discrimination," noted Governor Perry. "Our great state is a land of many cultures, and in Texas, we derive strength from our diversity. We know well that prejudice and discrimination on the part of one stand in the way of prosperity and advancement for all."

The Department's board acknowledged Texas Railroad Commissioner Michael Williams for his role in leading the state's long-term relief efforts following the hurricanes Katrina and Rita disasters. Commissioner Williams was instrumental in securing the state's \$428 million in federal

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221 E. 11TH • AUSTIN, TEXAS 78701 • (800) 525-0657 • (512) 475-3800

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dollars allocated to help rebuild Texas homes and help evacuees find homes. He served as the State's liaison between local, state and federal officials, and private and charitable organizations who continue to work to make housing recovery in Texas a reality without regard to race, color, national origin, religion, sex, disability or familial status.

“As stewards of the public trust, we serve all Texans in their pursuit of equal housing whether they find themselves in need due to a natural disaster or merely in the course of events in their daily lives. There is no room in our great state for discrimination or prejudice against any of our citizens,” Commissioner Williams said.

The state board in its resolution said that “it is the policy of the Texas Department of Housing and Community Affairs to support equal housing opportunity in the administration of its programs and services, including encouraging equitable lending practices for its homebuyer programs, and Fair Housing rules and guidelines for its multifamily developments.”

*The Texas Department of Housing and Community Affairs is Texas' lead agency responsible for affordable housing, public and energy assistance programs, and colonia activities. The Department annually administers funds in excess of \$400 million, the majority of which is derived from mortgage revenue bond financing and refinancing, federal grants, and federal tax credits.*