



TEXAS MUNICIPAL LEAGUE

Empowering Texas cities to serve their citizens

President **Karen Hunt**, Mayor, Coppell
Executive Director **Bennett Sandlin**

May 4, 2021

The Honorable John Whitmire
Chairman, Criminal Justice Committee
Texas State Senate
PO Box 12068
Austin, Texas 78711-2068

Dear Chairman Whitmire,

I am writing on behalf of the Texas Municipal League to express our opposition to **S.B. 1486** by **Hughes**. The bill would, except for purposes of emergency management, prohibit a political subdivision from adopting or enforcing an order, ordinance, or other measure that imposes a curfew to regulate the movements or actions of persons younger than 18 years of age.

The current statutory framework for city adoption of juvenile curfew ordinances contains safeguards not present for any other type of city ordinance. Pursuant to Local Government Code Sec. 370.002, both home-rule and general law cities are required to review their juvenile curfew ordinances every three years at a public hearing for the purpose of determining the impact of the ordinance on the community and whether the ordinance is necessary to remedy any specific problems. This process brings local leaders and citizens together every three years to evaluate the effectiveness and necessity of a juvenile curfew ordinance. As a result, some cities have abolished their curfew ordinances. Many others have lessened penalties and added exceptions to avoid unduly harsh outcomes while preserving their ordinances to keep area children safe.

Current law is uniquely structured to give city officials and residents an added level of oversight over curfew ordinances and effectively promotes a balanced approach to public safety. Instead of the outright elimination of local authority to address public safety concerns through juvenile curfew ordinances, we ask the committee to consider preserving the ability of local officials to work with citizens to craft community-supported safety measures.

For these reasons, we oppose the bill. Thank you for your consideration and please do not hesitate to contact me if I can be of any assistance to you.

Sincerely,

Monty Wynn
Director, Grassroots and Legislative Services
Texas Municipal League