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Sen Bettencourt, et al, Files Amicus Brief Objecting to Release of Inmates from Harris County Jail
State Reps Harless, Huberty, Paul, Cain, Oliverson, Bohac, Swanson, and Murphy also sign on to the filing

Houston, TX – Senator Bettencourt, joined by Representatives Harless, Huberty, Paul, Cain, Oliverson, Bohac, Swanson, and Murphy, filed an Amicus Brief in Federal Judge Lee Rosenthal’s Court in the case of Russell vs. Harris County to **“object to the wholesale release of individuals accused of felony offenses from the Harris County Jail.”** Citing a burden of concerns of the **“mass release of individuals accused of felony offenses currently housed in the Harris County Jail”** this group of Harris County legislators is calling for the dismissal of the current lawsuit.

This strong stand is taken by a group of legislators that represent a large portion of Harris County’s population. The eight State Representatives represent well over 1.56 million constituents across the county, while Senator Bettencourt represents just over 950,000 constituents in Senate District 7.

“Together we represent approximately 2 million plus constituents of Harris County, the vast majority of whom are opposed to this inmate release,” said Senator Bettencourt.

Quoting from the brief, **“The above State Legislators from Harris County, Texas are against the dangerous release of accused felony offenders from the Harris County jail without any consideration of law enforcement officers and crime victims, as this will assuredly continue a crime wave in Harris County,”** added Senator Bettencourt.

The approximately 2 million plus constituents represented by this group of legislators include law enforcement officers, medical workers, veterans, small business owners, parents now educating their children at home, crime victims, and many others who are navigating the difficult circumstances surrounding the COVID-19 panic.

As noted in the brief, Houston Police Chief Art Acevedo has also previously stated that the release of this inmates would **“put additional strain on already limited law enforcement resources and divert them from aiding with the pandemic control efforts.”** Police Chief Acevedo, Harris County Constables, and other law enforcement officials held a press conference today to express their continuing disapproval of this effort.

The brief asks the court to deny the plaintiffs request for injunctive relief and dismiss the lawsuit in its entirety.

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