

Petition for the Recall of John Whitmire, City of Houston Mayor

To the Mayor and City Council of the city of Houston,

We, the undersigned hereto, who are qualified voters of the City of Houston, request the removal of John Whitmire from the office of mayor of Houston for the following reasons as of October 6th, 2025:

1. Financial Mismanagement

- a. Reversal, pausal, or cancellation of 13 pre-approved or already installed street improvement projects. With the information available, we estimate the incurred cost of these actions has totaled over \$32 million. We cannot stress how grossly underestimated these costs are because the city refuses to release documents or information detailing costs for several of these. The estimation does not include original costs the city paid for these installations, studies, or plans. This is irresponsible.
- b. His rejection of federal funds for improvement projects will increase the deficit of Houston since the city has to borrow more to pay for those projects. Pausing pre-approved projects has also risked federal funding.
- c. His appointments to METRO created a board that rejected millions in federal funding for voter-approved transit projects.
- d. Increasing the police budget by \$1 billion over the next five years, cutting budgets of city departments that are already experiencing backlog to service requests will cost the city in the long-term due to more difficult and extensive repairs and loss of water.
- e. GRB expansion will result in the short-term and long-term loss of billions of dollars. The convention industry is a dying industry. Cities across the country have already expanded their centers and have consistently lost money quarter over quarter because of it. The city did not even pay for a consultant to assess costs/potential revenue. The city will have to pay organizations to come here. We are experiencing a budget crisis. This is the mayor being irresponsible with city funds.
- f. Photo-ops and unnecessary overtime pay for police. During the peak of the budgeting session, Whitmire was going on photo-op outings with police and holding several task force meetings outside of regular hours. Both of these are unnecessary and a waste of the city's ever-dwindling funds.
- g. Directing Metro to act as a secondary public works. The point of Metro is not to pay for road resurfacing across the city, Whitmire has directed it to be used as such. This is clear financial and organizational mismanagement.

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- h. Underfunding drainage improvements (in favor of a police budget increase and wasteful street project spending) and refusing to address Houston's issue with developing in flood zones will have long-term negative financial impacts on the city. The drainage deal that allowed the budget to be certified still drastically underfunds much needed updates and repairs.
- 2. Anti-democratic actions, lack of transparency, and lying to Houstonians
 - a. Ignored voter approved Proposition B. What is the point of having resident driven policy change if the city is going to completely disregard it. That is not democracy.
 - b. Ignored voter approved MetroNEXT plan and bond. Again, blatantly anti-democratic. Why should voters trust the city or vote in anything city related if they are going to be ignored.
 - c. Mayor Whitmire attempted to suppress the 1st amendment rights of protesters with an ordinance barring protests outside of houses.
 - d. Directing HPD to cooperate with ICE, an agency currently acting outside the law and regularly violating the rights of citizens and non-citizens.
 - e. As referenced above, the city refused to release information on incurred costs from pausing, redesigning, or conducting more studies on pre-approved street safety projects.
 - f. Mayor Whitmire's spokesperson has repeatedly lied or misrepresented facts on behalf of the mayor
 - g. Whitmire lied about HPD and ICE cooperation, at first stating there was no cooperation, then admitting that it was because of a policy in place when the policy does not require ICE to be called for traffic stops or domestic violence situations.
 - h. Claimed to the public and media that the balanced budget would not require an increase in taxes. It does.
 - i. Lied about motives behind certain street safety projects. He claimed, publicly, that the priority was decreasing traffic and safety. Text messages obtained between him and others showed that the motivation was personal.
 - j. Proliferated the lie that pro-palestinian protesters were paid by Iran. He also referred to those protesters—who are Houstonians and his constituents—as enemies of the Israeli consulate at a dinner.
 - k. Lied to approximately 15 community groups about “scheduling conflicts” when they attempted to set up a meeting with him and made no attempt to reschedule.

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- l. A public session recording was wiped from the internet when residents were kicked out.
 - m. Whitmire lied about the reason to remove the Austin Street bike lane, citing the Fire Department having difficulty driving down the street or parking along it. The Fire Department denied that those were issues.
 - n. Making street redesign decisions on the Telephone Road project without public input while claiming there was public input.
 - o. Redline Delays. The city removed signal priority for the Red Line without notifying the community or offering an explanation. This basically makes using the Red Line pointless through that stretch of downtown and it the opposite of best practices regarding mass transport.
 - p. This might belong in its own category, but the Mayor has been seen several times on his phone texting during public comment sessions and leaving council meetings early. Houston's mayor should be able to attend in full and pay attention during meetings.
- 3. Actively and **knowingly** making decisions that endanger Houstonians and visitors as well as negatively impact businesses.
 - a. Collaboration with ICE has directly led to the harm of Houston residents and made Houston a scarier and more dangerous place to live.
 - b. The unsustainable and irresponsible expansion of the George R. Brown convention center will redline the East End for a decade or more, barring an entire community from opportunity, access, and creating longer response time for EMS vehicles.
 - c. The I-45 expansion pushed for by Mayor Whitmire has already negatively impacted small businesses in EaDo.
 - d. He consistently chooses personal preference or special interests' preference over the good of the city and data backed statistics regarding measures that actually improve safety for motorists, cyclists, and pedestrians alike. This is evidenced by the aforementioned 13 street safety projects that have been impacted by his flippant "guiding mobility principles" that only prioritize cars driving faster. These decisions have directly led to the death and or injury of hundreds of Houstonians each year. The number of injuries and deaths have increased each year he's been in office.
 - e. Closure of Polk Street will negatively impact business, workers, commuters, students, and residents as it is a critical connector of East Downtown and Downtown. Ems response times will be longer as a result of the reroute if

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Polk Street is closed. This will almost assuredly be the difference between life and death for some Houstonians

- f. Axing the Gulfton Public transport expansion and justified it in a racist and ostracizing way by claiming Gulfton residents were “undocumented immigrants” who “don’t want to be a part of the Galleria” or “welcomed in the Galleria.”
 - g. Forced retirements of city workers and pensions and payments that have not been paid out. This obviously impacts the individuals that aren't being paid, especially since we are experiencing a cost of living crisis. It also negatively impacts the entire city with the loss of several decades worth of expertise and experience.
 - h. This has been mentioned through other lenses already, but underfunding drainage improvements will have a short-term and long-term impact on Houstonians. They will be more at risk of losing their homes, taking on damage during hurricanes and storms, and dying.
 - i. De-prioritizing and removing multimodal infrastructure makes living in this city more difficult and more expensive, especially for lower-income households.
 - j. The ramp of enforcement for the “civility ordinance” and “sidewalk ordinance” as well as the new ordinance passed that prohibits lingering on medians is a direct attack on homeless people in this city and does nothing to solve the issue of homelessness. Whitmire has chosen to lead with a big stick instead of pursuing programs that result in transitions from homelessness to long term housing and stability.
 - k. Waiving sidewalk requirements makes Houston harder to traverse for pedestrians and differently-abled people. Frankly, not having sidewalks for new developments is an incredibly outdated and unhelpful policy.
 - l. Encouraging and supporting the Shen Yun show in Houston, which has credibly been accused of human trafficking and forced labor practices.
 - m. Refusing to do anything to protect individuals that have experienced sexual-harassment with the Houston Fire Department system. He dismissed the issue as “political”
4. Appointing yes-men and unqualified people to run critical departments
- a. Rancy Macchi, a lifestyle coach and host of a Disney podcast was only allowed to head Public Works after the Mayor and Council voted to allow non engineers to take the position. This decision received national attention in both the news and the American Council of Engineering Companies and the

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American Society of Civil Engineers wrote Whitmire disapproving of the hiring choices and emphasizing the importance of engineering expertise for this position.

- b. Whitmire appointed his own donor to chair Houston First.
 - c. Elizabeth Brock was appointed the head of METRO after leaving a non-profit that lobbied the use of EVs and microtransit in the city. MetroNEXT was then axed and soon after the city rolled out glorified ev golf carts with no AC as an actual solution to transport needs in this city.
 - d. Mary Benton is the mouth-piece for Whitmire's administration and has repeatedly lied or misrepresented facts to make Whitmire look better.
 - e. Whitmire replaced the LGBTQ+ advisory board because they disagreed with him. The people currently on the board are those who Whitmire can rely on for no pushback.
 - f. Whitmire admitted through text that the new fire chief, Thomas Muñoz, was someone he could rely on to agree with him and his messaging.
 - g. The Montrose Board was almost entirely replaced by Whitmire after he got pushback from the previous board over the proposed redesign for the street. His new appointees have shown to be completely on board with the Mayor's vision.
 - h. This probably could be a separate category, but Whitmire attended a paid access only fundraiser for Republican Congressman, Dan Crenshaw, who is on record voting for policy that directly harms Houstonians. Frankly, it was a slap in the face to the city and left many feeling betrayed by the mayor
5. Poor long-term decision making and vision for the city.
- a. Not adequately investing in drainage, increasing future flooding risks and making funding an issue for future administrations..
 - b. Not changing city development ordinances to end development in flood zones
 - c. Aforementioned cancellations, uninstallments, redesigns of several street projects set Houston back, at minimum, a decade and will have harmful long-term impact on the lives—as in life or death—of Houstonians as well as economic growth and mobility for individuals and businesses, which results in a decrease or stagnation of growth overtime.
 - d. Potential water deal with Abbott and West Texas will exacerbate Houston's predicted water shortage in five years. It also subsidizes the exploitation and extraction of Texas resources by helping these AI and data mining companies that do nothing but harm the communities around them.

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- e. The GRB expansion comes back into play here because the city will be in the red for this project for years to come and, based on contemporaries, will never see a financial return.
- f. Despite his emphasis on public safety and funding surge to HPD, violent crime has increased since he's been in office.
- g. The forced retirements of public workers who have decades of experience and expertise could have a long-term impact of that loss of knowledge being felt in city policy and practices in the future.

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I know that the purpose of the attached petition is to request that an election be held to determine whether John Whitmire is recalled from the office of mayor.

Circulation Start Date:
10/06/2025

Pg. #:

FOR REGISTERED CITY OF HOUSTON VOTERS ONLY

Date Signed	Printed Name: John Doe Signature: John Doe	Address where you're registered to vote	County	Birthdate or Voter Registration No.	Phone (Optional) Email (Optional)
____/____/2025	Printed Name: Signature:	Street Address: Houston, TX Zip:		____/____/____ or No. _____	Phone: Email:
____/____/2025	Printed Name: Signature:	Street Address: Houston, TX Zip:		____/____/____ or No. _____	Phone: Email:
____/____/2025	Printed Name: Signature:	Street Address: Houston, TX Zip:		____/____/____ or No. _____	Phone: Email:
____/____/2025	Printed Name: Signature:	Street Address: Houston, TX Zip:		____/____/____ or No. _____	Phone: Email:
____/____/2025	Printed Name: Signature:	Street Address: Houston, TX Zip:		____/____/____ or No. _____	Phone: Email:
____/____/2025	Printed Name: Signature:	Street Address: Houston, TX Zip:		____/____/____ or No. _____	Phone: Email:
____/____/2025	Printed Name: Signature:	Street Address: Houston, TX Zip:		____/____/____ or No. _____	Phone: Email:
____/____/2025	Printed Name: Signature:	Street Address: Houston, TX Zip:		____/____/____ or No. _____	Phone: Email:

Affidavit of Circulator: State of Texas, County of Harris

I, _____, being first duly sworn on oath depose and say: that I am one of the signers of the aboved petition, that the statements made therein are true, and that each signature appearing thereto was made in my presence on the day and date it purports to have been made, and I solemnly swear that the same is a genuine signature of the person whose name it purports to be.

Signature: _____

Sworn to and subscribed before me this day of _____, 2025.

Notary Public, State of Texas