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June 14, 2010

The Honorable Samuel T. Biscoe & Commissioners  
 Travis County Commissioners Court  
 314 W. 11th St.  
 Austin, TX 78701

Dear Judge Biscoe and Commissioners:

On behalf of the Heritage Society of Austin, I am writing regarding the historic exemption component of your intent to consider property tax rates.



**HERITAGE  
 SOCIETY OF  
 AUSTIN**

P.O. BOX 2113  
 AUSTIN, TEXAS 78768  
 512-474-5198  
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As the Court considers this issue, we urge you to bear in mind that the historic preservation has significant economic benefits for our region. According to the Texas Historical Commission, preservation generates more than \$1.8 billion of economic activity annually in Texas, and close to \$140 million in the Austin area alone. Even in a down economy, when property values and sales tax revenues are down, the bright spots in Austin's budget are preservation-related, such as the revenue our high hotel occupancy rates generate for our City. Furthermore, historic preservation is one of the highest job-generating economic development options available, with a significant positive 'churning' effect on our local economy.

The return on investment for preservation is clear, and we respectfully request that you continue to support a policy that encourages the preservation of historic assets. If the Court initiates a review of its property tax rates, we ask that an expert in historic preservation be included as a stakeholder.

Thank you for your attention to this issue and for all your ongoing work to build a great future for our county while respecting our valuable heritage.

Regards,

Mandy Dealey  
 President