



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

No Double Standards: Controller Hollins Demands Fair Play in City Sponsorship Scrutiny

HOUSTON (Oct. 22, 2024) — City Controller Chris Hollins filed a letter today with the City of Houston’s Office of Inspector General and the Houston City Council Ethics Committee requesting that, should an investigation into the fundraising practices for the Controller’s Investor Conference take place as requested by Mayor John Whitmire, the scope of the investigation must be expanded to include fundraising practices for the Mayor’s State of the City event.

“Bias has no place in public service. What’s good for the goose is good for the gander,” said Hollins. “Let me be clear: I do not consider the marketing practices of either event to be unlawful. But I do believe the same set of rules should apply equally to both the Mayor’s and Controller’s fundraising activities.”

The letter describes how the Controller used the same fundraising model for the Investor Conference that was used by the Mayor for the State of the City event.

The only difference is that the Mayor controls the proceeds from the State of the City, while the proceeds of the Investor Conference flow to a non-profit donor-advised fund, where an independent body has exclusive spending authority.

Hollins continued: “By applying equal scrutiny to both our offices, we can ensure fairness, transparency, and adherence to ethical standards across all levels of City government. This approach will not only address current concerns, but also set a precedent for accountability in future fundraising activities by City officials.”

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PAGE 2

ABOUT CITY OF HOUSTON CONTROLLER'S OFFICE:

Established in 1903, the City of Houston Controller's Office is the cornerstone of financial oversight and accountability for America's fourth-largest city. With a mission to uphold Houston's fiscal integrity and protect resident's tax dollars, the office oversees a broad spectrum of the City's financial operations, including its budget, investments, and debts. Committed to transparency and fiscal responsibility, the Controller's Office is key to maintaining the economic vitality of Houston, contributing to its status as a thriving metropolis for its diverse community.

ABOUT CITY OF HOUSTON INVESTOR CONFERENCE:

The investor conference is a specialized gathering aimed at bolstering financial obligations for capital improvement projects in Houston and throughout Texas. It serves as a platform for the City of Houston and its neighboring sectors to present their financial performance, growth strategies, and plans to a targeted audience of investors, analysts, fund managers, and other financial professionals. Additionally, main Texas school districts, counties, and cities like San Antonio, Austin, and Dallas have the opportunity to showcase their upcoming financial transaction and projects.

ABOUT CONTROLLER CHRIS HOLLINS:

Chris Hollins, serving as Houston's City Controller since January 2024, brings a dynamic approach to City governance and financial management. With a rich background in legal practice and management consulting, coupled with innovative leadership as Harris County Clerk, Hollins is dedicated to enhancing the city's fiscal practices and community engagement. Educated at Morehouse College, Yale Law School, and Harvard Business School, Hollins's commitment to accountability and service excellence drives his mission to build a financially resilient Houston. Residing in the Third Ward with his family, his work is deeply informed by his strong community ties.