



2506 Sutherland St. • Houston, TX 77023 • www.unitehere23.org

May 20, 2026

Dear Mayor Whitmire and Houston City Council Members,

On behalf of Unite Here Local 23, I am writing to express our support for Mayor Whitmire's proposed FY27 budget.

This budget reflects a serious and responsible effort to balance two important obligations: minimizing new costs on Houston residents while protecting the hardworking City employees who deliver essential services every day.

Houston families are facing real financial pressure, and any increase in costs must be approached carefully. At the same time, the City cannot maintain reliable public services if it balances its budget on the backs of municipal employees through layoffs, deep staffing reductions, or cuts that weaken basic operations.

The proposed FY27 budget takes a measured approach. It asks residents for as little as possible, phases in changes responsibly, and focuses on stabilizing the City's finances without creating unnecessary hardship. Just as importantly, it recognizes that City employees are not abstract line items in a budget. They are sanitation workers, public works crews, first responders, inspectors, administrative staff, and frontline employees who keep Houston moving.

Avoiding layoffs is not just a workforce issue. It is a service-delivery issue. When the City loses experienced employees, residents feel it through slower response times, delayed repairs, reduced reliability, and weaker day-to-day services. Protecting the City workforce protects the public.

We appreciate that this budget does not take the easy political route of pretending Houston can meet growing demands without difficult choices. Instead, it presents a balanced path forward: control costs where possible, limit the burden on residents, preserve essential services, and avoid unnecessary harm to the employees who serve this city.

For those reasons, UNITE HERE Local 23 supports the FY27 budget and urges City Council to approve it.

Respectfully,

Willy Gonzales

Secretary-Treasurer

UNITE HERE Local 23