

PRESS RELEASE

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BUZBEE CALLS ON MAYOR TO HALT DRAG QUEEN STORYTIME PROGRAM

Today mayoral candidate Tony Buzbee called on Mayor Turner to suspend immediately the Drag Queen Storytime program and to review all readers. The call for suspension is an immediate result of reports that registered sex offender, Albert Garza, was allowed to read to children as part of the Drag Queen Storytime program. "This is not about sexual orientation or drag queens. This is about the safety of our children." Said Buzbee. "If this mayor can't ensure that sex offenders are not provided access to our children, then he should shut the program down—now." The Drag Queen Storytime is a program offered at the Houston Public Library, supported by Mayor Turner and a majority of Houston City Council. The program's stated purpose is to provide "kids glamorous, positive, and unabashedly queer role models." Since it began, the program has come under fire from various groups. One group has sought information on the backgrounds of the drag queen readers; the city resisted providing such information, asking the Attorney General to intervene. According to Buzbee: "Why would the Mayor cover up this crime? What else is he hiding? At best, this is yet another example of the Mayor's inability to manage competently. We cannot have a program in place in this city that allows a convicted child sex offender access to our children. We need to ask this mayor: How many more sex offenders are involved in this program or any other City program with access to children? Where is the accountability?"

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