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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**Houston Housing Authority Launches Trailblazing “Heat Relief” Initiative**

*A program that ensures air conditioning access for all residents in HHA public housing properties*

**Houston, TX**—Scorching temperatures reaching unprecedented levels of over 100 degrees have placed this summer in Houston as the hottest summer ever recorded. The effects of climate change make life without air conditioning not only unbearable but also deadly. In response to this urgent call for action, The Houston Housing Authority (HHA), under new leadership, has taken a historical step forward by introducing the Heat Relief Initiative. This unprecedented program provides AC for every resident living in HHA public housing properties.

“I may be new to Texas, but it didn't take long to realize that people living without air conditioning is not acceptable. It's not a luxury, it's a necessity. So, I knew we had to take action, fight for the money, and fix this issue,” said HHA President and CEO David A. Northern Sr.

Despite the lack of a current mandate for air conditioning provisions in housing agreements from The United States Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and the absence of any state or city laws requiring public housing to have A/C, HHA recognized the problem and secured over \$2 million in crucial funding for the Heat Relief initiative from HUD.

“While HUD has not mandated it, we fought tirelessly to secure funding, and our persistence has paid off. Our commitment to our clients means they should never have to endure such intolerable conditions and I'm grateful to our local leaders who have supported our work and helped to make this happen,” said Northern.

Congresswoman Sheila Jackson Lee praised the initiative saying, “I am so proud of this new initiative of HHA that really focuses on the health and safety of their residents. This Initiative sets a remarkable precedent and a milestone in HHA's commitment to its residents' quality of life. It serves as a shining example of what can be achieved through determination and compassion. The heat has been unbearable; people have lost their lives. This program is truly needed. I am proud to be able to use federal funds to support this initiative and to be able to work with HHA to bring this vital service to the residents of HHA.”

The Heat Relief Initiative is a transformative program that marks a significant stride towards creating safer and healthier living environments for some of the city's most vulnerable communities. “With record-high heat indexes becoming the new reality in Houston, the work we do today will bring relief to current and future residents alike. Our hope is that we have set a new standard, becoming a model for other housing authorities to pursue the well-being of their residents,” said HHA Chair LaRence Snowden.

**About Houston Housing Authority:** HHA provides affordable homes and services to more than 60,000 low-income Houstonians, including more than 17,000 families housed through the Housing Choice Voucher Program as well as another 4,200 living in 19 public housing and tax credit developments around the city. HHA also administers one of the nation's largest voucher programs exclusively serving homeless veterans. More information about the Houston Housing Authority can be found at [www.housingforhouston.com](http://www.housingforhouston.com).

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