



TORIBIO "TERRY" PALACIOS
CRIMINAL DISTRICT ATTORNEY

May 22, 2025

Dr. Joel Rivera, Ph.D.
Director
Hidalgo County Urban County Program
1916 Tesoro Blvd.
Pharr, Texas 78577

RE: Request for Opinion from the Hidalgo County District Attorney's Office regarding Emergency Solutions Grant funding to Christians Manor, a nonprofit organization, provided by the Urban County Program (UCP), and whether said funding would violate State or Local law.

Honorable Director Rivera,

Please be advised that this opinion is being provided pursuant to the conflict-of-interest provision of 24 C.F.R. § 576.404, and as applicable, 24 C.F.R. § 200.318(c), as to the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG) funds. Additionally, the opinion is provided for the UCP ESG program's consideration of a request from HUD for exception to section (b) of the 24 C.F.R. § 576.404 to address an appearance of a conflict of interest under 24 C.F.R. § 200.318(c), for Hidalgo County Commissioner Pct. 2 Eduardo "Eddie" Cantu.

Based on information provided by the UCP, Commissioner Cantu was previously a founding board member of the Christian's Manor nonprofit organization. At present, Commissioner Cantu formally retired from active service on the board over a year ago, thereby withdrawing from exercising any functions, decision making, or responsibilities with respect to Christian's Manor activities under the ESG program.

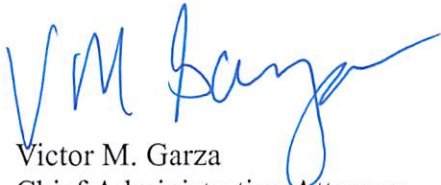
Our office reviewed applicable conflict of interest provisions the Texas Local Government Code and Texas Government Code, State of Texas Attorney General Opinions, ESG program conflict of interest policy, UCP ESG program policy, and pertinent County of Hidalgo, Texas policy and procedures, as well as other information, documents or instruments deemed necessary and advisable to review for the purposes of this request for opinion.

To the extent that the request for opinion may be a requisite of the UCP seeking an applicable exception to section (b) of the 24 C.F.R. § 576.404, the opinion of this office is that the interest

for which an exception may be sought, ESG funding awarded to Christian's Manor as to any apparent conflict of interest for Commissioner Cantu, would not violate State or Local law.

It is advised that should the UCP pursue a request for an exemption under 24 C.F.R. § 576.404(b)(3), the UCP should proceed accordingly and ensure any and all requisites to said request for exception from HUD are complied with; that approval of an ESG funding for Christian's Manor is subject to receipt of an exception; and that UCP assures conformity with any other applicable State or local law requirements.

Respectfully,



Victor M. Garza
Chief Administrative Attorney