



HISTORIC PRESERVATION

Historic Assessment

Property Address: 1106 Burleson Street

1. Application Details

Applicant: Clarence Lee Callies, Jr.
Type: Historic Landmark Designation
Date Received: 4 March 2024

2. Findings

The property at 1106 Burleson Street is a one-story vernacular residence with Craftsman style influence located in the Dignowity Hill neighborhood of City Council District 2. Stella and Clarence Lee Callies, Sr., currently own the property. Dignowity Hill was San Antonio's first exclusive residential suburb. The area was settled by Dr. Anthony Michael Dignowity, a physician and Czech immigrant, who built his family home on a hill to the east of town and called it Harmony House. During the latter part of the nineteenth century, Dignowity Hill, as it became known, was home to prominent San Antonio merchants and business owners who constructed large estates. Dignowity Hill was an exclusive and affluent residential area in San Antonio due to its high elevation, proximity to downtown, the size of the lots, and lack of city water, which required residents to construct expensive water collecting systems. The arrival of the railroad in 1877 significantly changed the neighborhood's built environment and demographic diversity. Industrial development greatly increased with the construction of an iron works factory, the development of a streetcar trolley line along Burnet Street (1891), and the extension of sewer and water lines to the area around the turn-of-the-century. By 1914, the neighborhood was surrounded by industry on the north and west, commerce on the south, and modest homes on the east. Dr. Dignowity died in 1875, and his Harmony House was later demolished. The property became Dignowity Park in 1926. The neighborhood consisted primarily of small Folk Victorian style houses and Craftsman Bungalows by the 1930s. Today, the neighborhood is a local historic district bounded by Sherman Street on the north, Commerce Street and Paso Hondo on the south, Palmetto Street on the east, and Cherry Street on the west. The subject property is located just two blocks outside the eastern boundary of the Dignowity Hill Historic District, along Palmetto Street. The subject property was built in 1949. The address first appeared in the 1951 City Directory as the home of Jason E. McCann, an Army clerk at Fort Sam Houston, and his wife Clara. In 1954, Roy and Alice Riojas purchased the property from the McCanns, and then in 1977 the Riojas sold the property to Stella and Clarence L. Callies, Sr.

Clarence L. Callies, Sr., is a nephew of the late Rev. Dr. Raymond A. Callies, Sr. Rev. Dr. Raymond A. Callies, Sr. began what is today one of the largest MLK Jr. marches in the nation. Improving the quality of life for all people was the dream of Dr. King and Reverend Callies. After the assassination of Dr. King in April 1968, Rev. Dr. Callies had a vision to do many things that would keep Dr. King's dream alive. Rev. Dr. Callies was also instrumental in the growth and development of San Antonio's Eastside. He was the founder and organizer of the Youth Leadership Conference for Community Progress. He and his organization were instrumental in getting traffic lights at busy intersections and improving drainage for the Eastside. He worked tirelessly to have Nebraska Street renamed Martin Luther King, Jr. Drive. He also founded J Street Park, Martin Luther King, Jr. Park and the Freedom Bridge on San Antonio's Eastside. One of Rev. Dr. Callies' greatest accomplishments was the dedication of the Martin Luther King, Jr. Plaza where he and his organization raised money to have a statue of Dr. King and the Monument of Brotherhood erected on the plaza site. His vision took him and his organization to the state

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capital in Austin, Texas, where he led a march to have Martin Luther King, Jr.'s birthday recognized as an official state holiday. He was also instrumental in having James Whitcomb Riley Junior High School renamed to Martin Luther King, Jr., Middle School (now M.L. King Academy, 3501 Martin Luther King Drive).

Clarence Callies, Sr., taught wood shop at James Fenimore Cooper Middle School in the San Antonio Independent School District, and also worked as a salesman for hog farmers. When the hog market declined in the late-1980s, Mr. Callies began growing vegetables in his yard and taking his harvest to local farmers markets. He also welcomed help from local residents in exchange for food crops. In 2015, Clarence L. Callies, Jr., had served 13 years of a 20-year prison sentence on charges related to the distribution of crack cocaine, and was one of four Texans among 46 nonviolent drug offenders whose prison sentences were commuted by President Barack Obama. Having been granted clemency at age 36 and given a second chance on freedom, Mr. Callies has since focused his time and energy on growing container plants in his yard and providing a variety of fresh, locally grown vegetables to help nourish the local community. The home was featured in a documentary about community gardens. Clarence L. Callies, Jr. currently resides at 1106 Burleson Street, and is the applicant for this request.

The subject property is a north-facing house, situated near the middle of a block bound to the north by Burleson Street, the east by Can't Stop Street, the south by Lamar Street, and the west by St. Charles Street. The block includes other one-story vernacular homes, Craftsman cottages, as well as minimal traditional residences.

3. Architectural Description

The subject property is a one-story vernacular residence with a side-gabled roof with wide, overhanging boxed eaves. Each façade is covered by tongue-and-grooved wooden drop siding. The roof is covered with composite shingles.

The front façade is asymmetrical with the front door on the left side, covered by a shed roof canopy supported by wood columns and brackets. There is a concrete front porch with two steps. The front door is flanked by one-over-one wood windows covered by sloped aluminum blade awnings. The central window features faux board and batten shutters. There is a smaller, one-over-one wood window on the right side of the front façade, also covered by a sloped aluminum blade awning, which matches a similar window on the left side of the right façade (west-facing). These windows also feature faux board and batten shutters.

The right façade features multi-level eaves, with the lower gable projecting a wing on the right side of the façade. The left eave of the projecting wing covers a side door on the primary façade, as well as a small concrete porch with two steps and a wood handrail affixed next to the door. There is a one-over-one wood window on the projecting wing, covered by a sloped aluminum blade awning. The left façade features multi-level eaves, with the lower gable projecting a wing on the right side of the façade. There are two one-over-one wood windows on the façade of the projecting wing, covered by sloped aluminum

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blade awnings, and there is another one-over-one wood window on the south wall of the wing. There is a paired set of two one-over-one wood windows on the primary façade.

There is a full-width rear addition with a sloping shed roof, giving the structure the appearance of a saltbox style. On the right façade, there is an aluminum sliding glass door entrance for the addition. There are three one-over-one aluminum windows on the rear façade of the addition.

There is a wooden storage shed at the end of the concrete driveway in the southwest corner of the parcel. The shed has a front-facing gabled roof with exposed rafters, and a pair of large, hinged wooden doors. There is a large chicken coop in the center of the back yard. A wooden ramp from the sidewalk to the front door, with wooden handrails, was built around 2013 or 2014, based on Google Street View images. A tall palm tree was removed from the front yard around 2020.

Character-defining features of 1106 Burleson Street include:

- One-story vernacular residence
- Sloped aluminum blade window awnings
- Wooden siding

4. Landmark Criteria

The property meets six criteria under UDC 35-607(b):

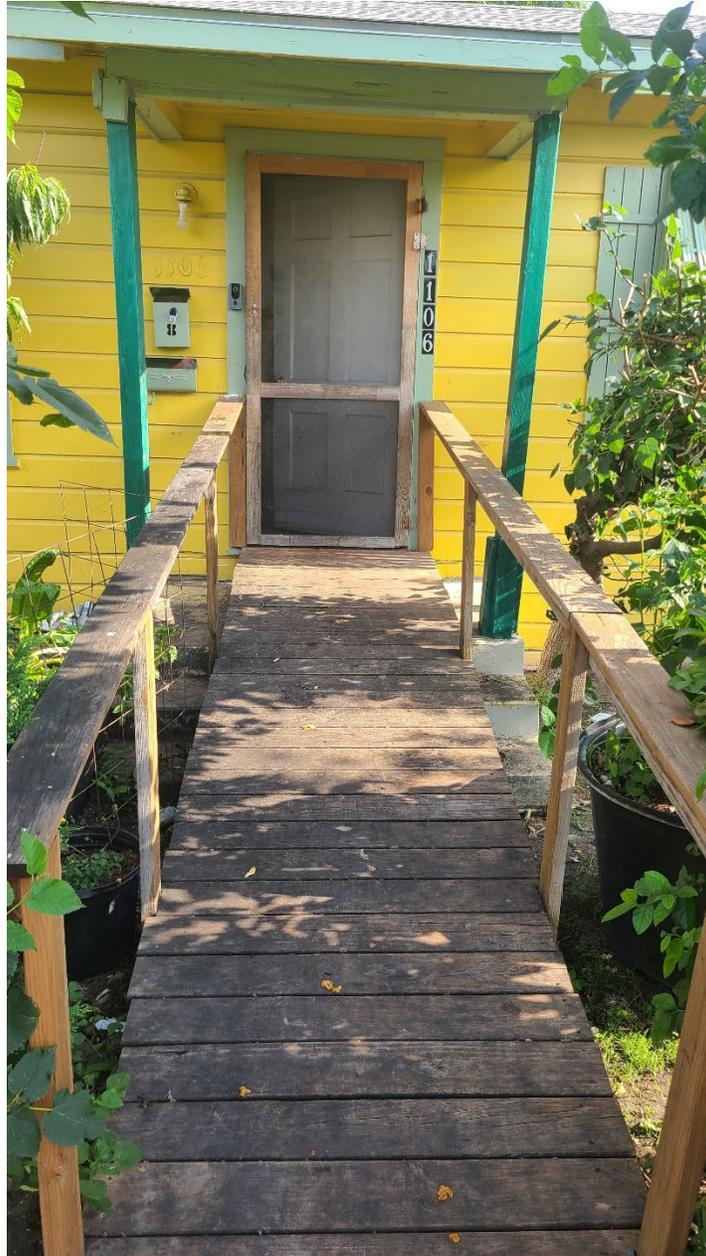
- **3. Its identification with a person or persons who significantly contributed to the development of the community, county, state, or nation;**
- **11. It is distinctive in character, interest or value; strongly exemplifies the cultural, economic, social, ethnic or historical heritage of San Antonio, Texas or the United States;**
- **13. It bears an important and significant relationship to other distinctive structures, sites, or areas, either as an important collection of properties or architectural style or craftsmanship with few intrusions, or by contributing to the overall character of the area according to the plan based on architectural, historic or cultural motif;**

5. Staff Recommendation

A property must meet at least three of the 16 criteria used to evaluate eligibility for landmark designation, and this assessment determines that 1106 Burleson Street meets this threshold. Further research may reveal additional significance associated with this property.



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1. 1106 Burlison Street – Front entryway

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2. 1106 Burseson Street – Right side (Northwest oblique)

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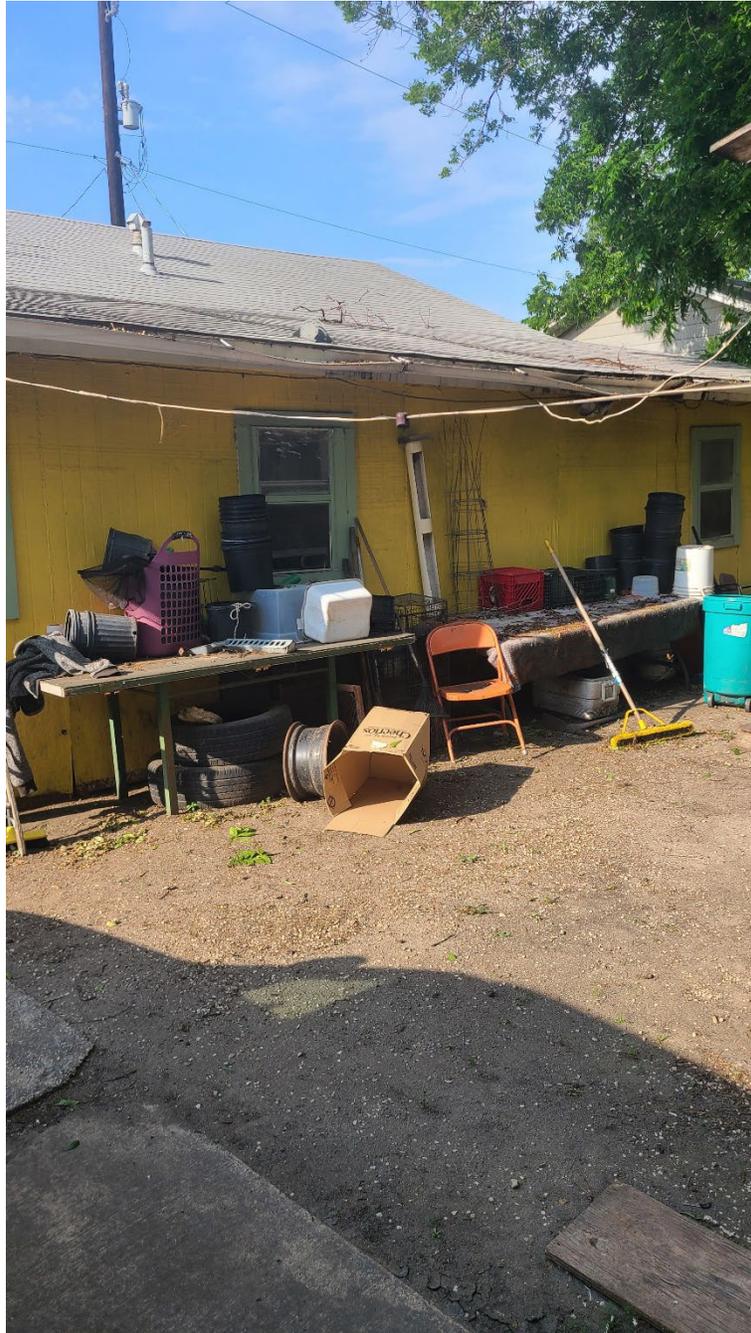
3. 1106 Burlison Street – Left side (East)

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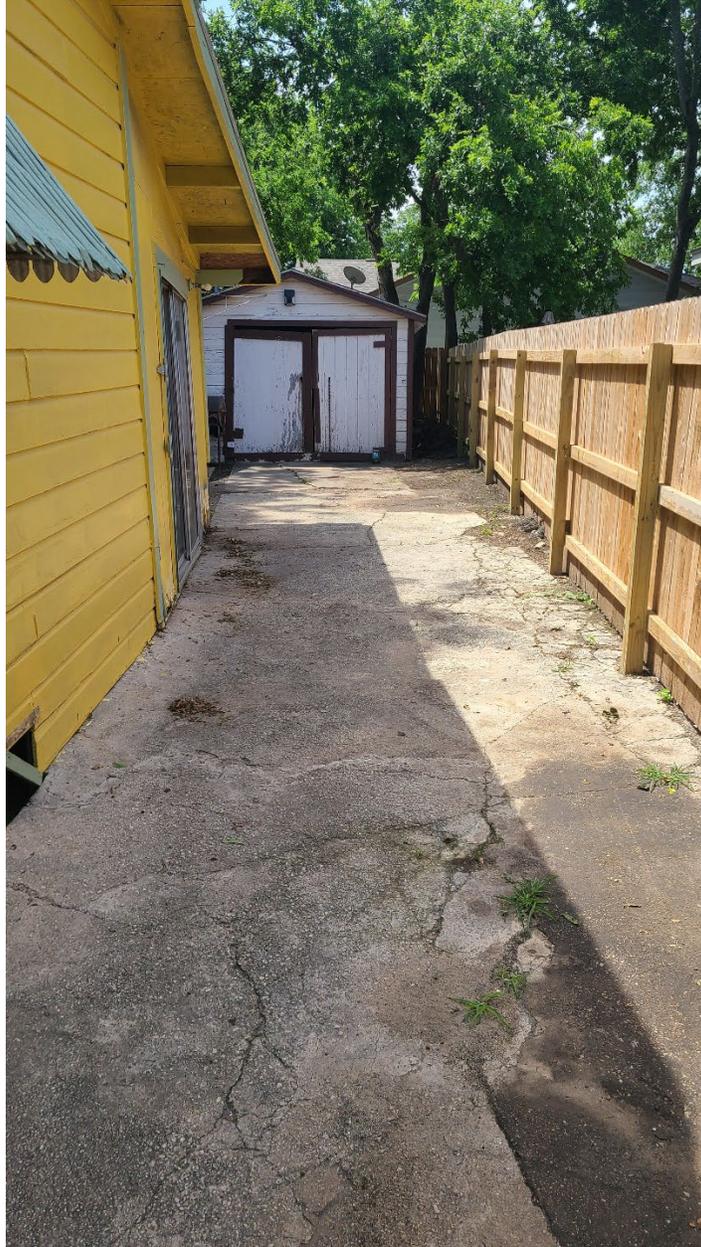
4. 1106 Burseson Street – Rear (South)

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5. 1106 Burseson Street (storage shed)

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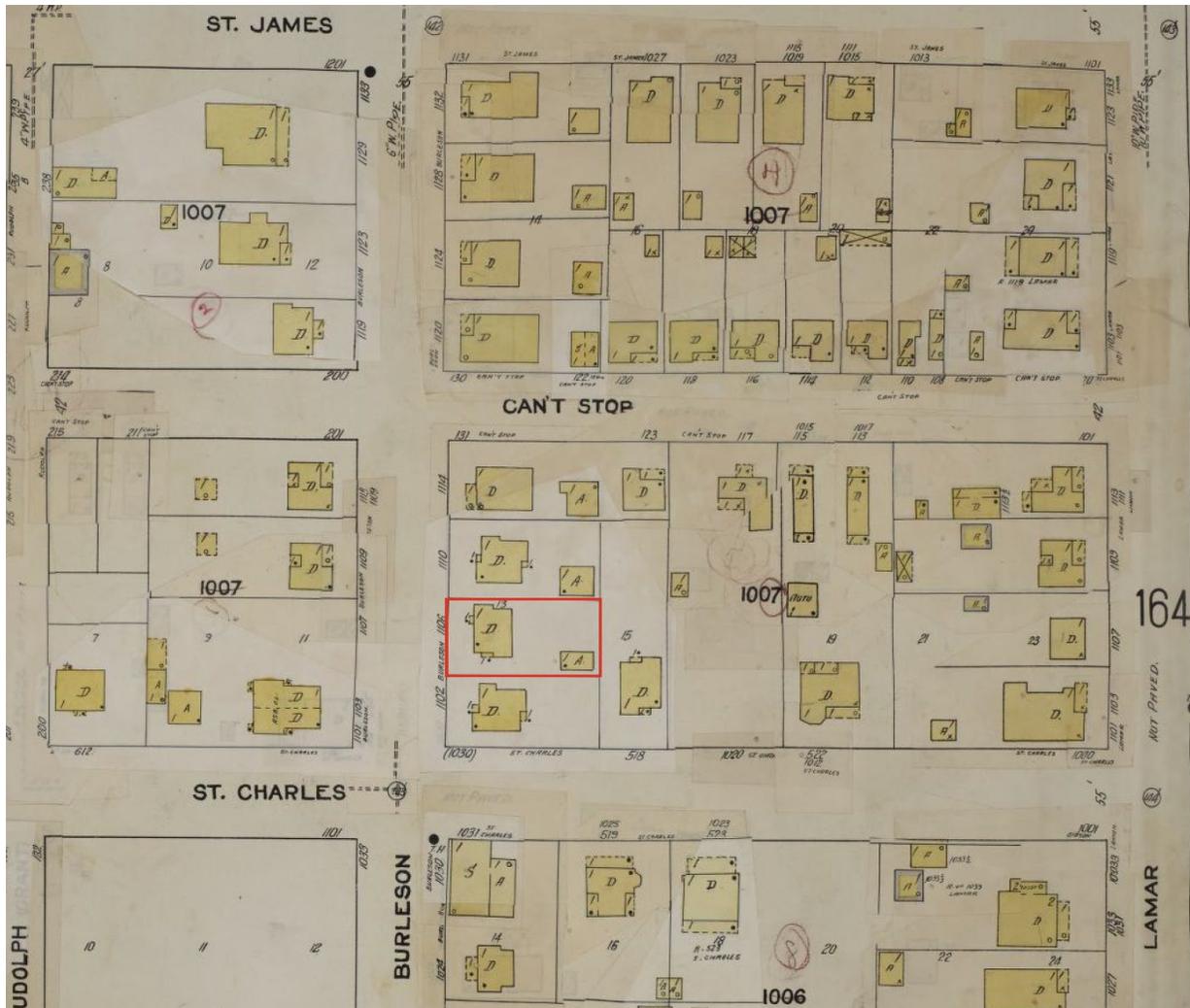
6. 1106 Burlison Street (chicken coop)

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7. Sanborn Map (1951), Vol.2, Sheet 163

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A PLANTED PASSION

By Vanessa Paiz



Mr. Clarence Callies has resided on Burleson St. in the Eastside for 42 of his 65 years. If you were to walk by his house you would stumble upon a rather extensive garden. Mr. Callies' passion for gardening was planted generations ago by his grandparents who originated from Victoria, Texas. A further devotion for a better diet was determined by a long family history of diabetes which later led to the amputation of Mr. Callies' own left foot and toes. "I remember my mom kept a jar of grease on the stove, that stuff damn near killed her" said Mr. Callies as he watered his garden and expressed the importance of a fresh and healthy diet.

His garden produces an abundance of fruits and vegetables consisting of okra, collard greens, cucumbers, sage, jalapeños, squash, tomatoes, grapes, and a tree that sprouts five different types of plums. A former wood shop teacher; Mr. Callies proceeded to share his wisdom on gardening with his community and has sold his produce on

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Guadalupe St. on the Westside of town to educate others about the dangers of diabetes. Although nowadays Mr. Callies harvests for personal use, he continues to humbly educate anyone willing to learn. His advice for new gardeners, "grow what you like and what you eat because, if you don't care, your plants are going to die." He suggested cow, chicken and horse manure composts for a rich soil, and seeds from Stoke Seeds and Burgress Seed and Plant Co. Mr. Callies' personal favorite nursery is Fanick Garden Center and Nursery on 1025 Holmgreen Rd, but he also suggests Home Depot or Walmart for your gardening needs.

Alongside gardening, Mr. Callies pickles his favorite vegetables - jalapeños, okra and cucumbers - in vinegar with pickling salt. Just a few simple ingredients but together they pack a savory and refreshing taste. Thanks to Mr. Callies for welcoming the community and neighbors into his garden, as well as for his time, wisdom and generosity.

7. The Point: EastPoint Community Newsletter (Fall 2014), p. 4



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San Antonio Express-News

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NEWS // LOCAL

San Antonio man among 46 whose sentences Obama cut

By **Kelsey Bradshaw**, Staff Writer
Updated July 13, 2015 8:50 p.m.



A San Antonio man is getting a second chance after President Barack Obama cut his prison sentence Monday along with those of 45 other nonviolent drug offenders.

In doing so, Obama more than doubled the number of nonviolent criminals to whom he has granted clemency since taking office.

"These men and women were not hardened criminals, but the overwhelming majority had been sentenced to at least 20 years; 14 of them had been sentenced to life for nonviolent drug offenses, so their punishments didn't fit the crime," Obama said in a video released on the [White House Facebook](#) page. "I believe that at its heart, America is a nation of second chances, and I believe these folks deserve their second chance."

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[Clarence Callies Jr.](#), 36, has served 13 years of a 20-year sentence on charges related to the distribution of crack cocaine. His father, [Clarence Callies Sr.](#), 66, said he spoke with his son Monday after receiving notice of his release, which will be in November.

"He's happy," Callies Sr. said.

Callies Jr. was among four Texans whose sentences were commuted. The others are [Juan Diego Castro](#) of Laredo and [Joe Louis Champion](#) and [Robert Earl Thomas Jr.](#), both of Houston.

MORE NEWS

This Hurricane Beryl evacuation chart shows Texans' dismally droll humor



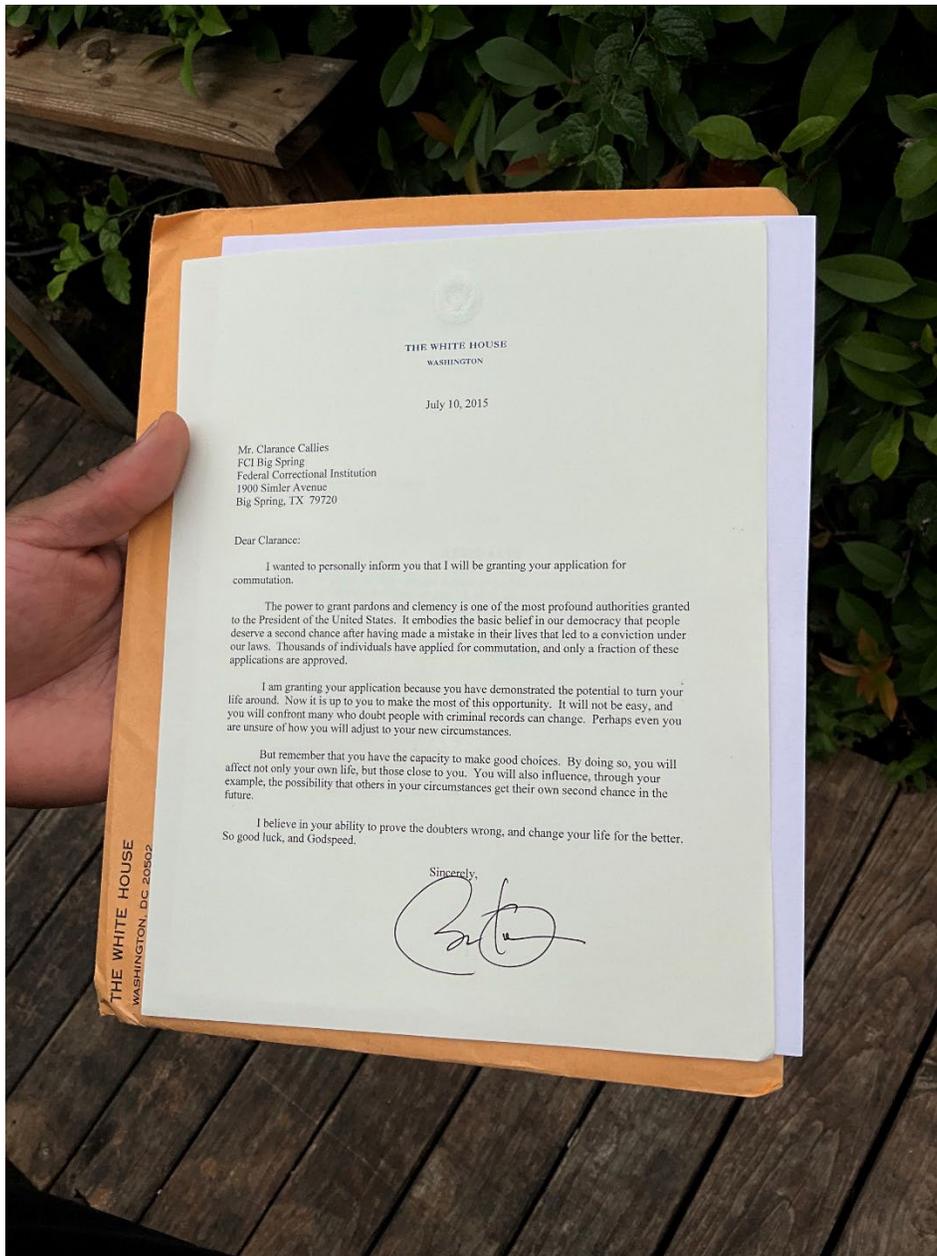
8. <https://www.expressnews.com/news/local/article/San-Antonio-man-among-46-whose-sentences-Obama-cut-6382829.php>

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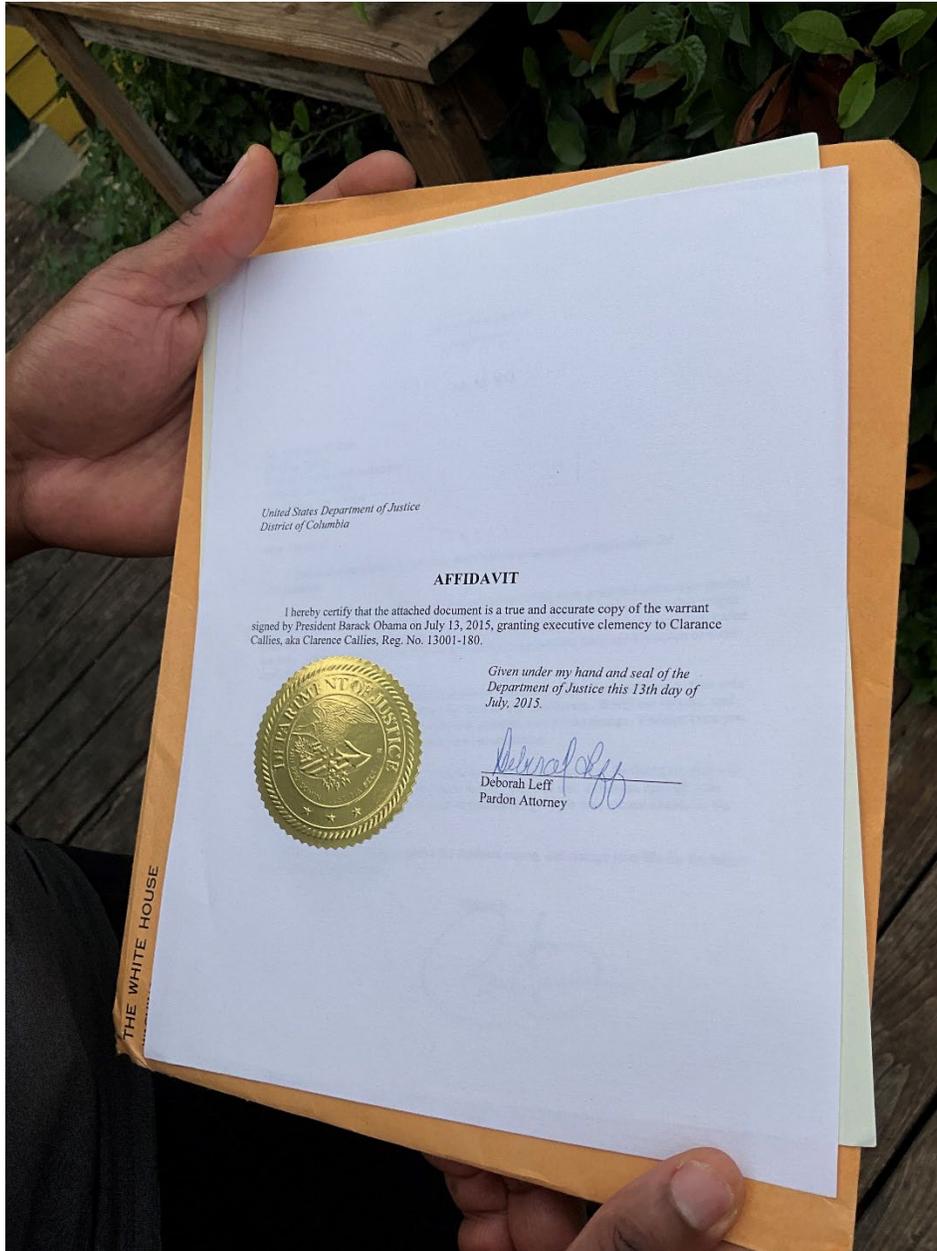
9. Clemency Letter from President Barack Obama (10 July 2015)

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10. Pardon Attorney's Certification Letter
