

# **KLBJ NEWS RADIO**

## **Austin's new curbside clothing recycle service contracts Ohio for profit, threatens local nonprofits**

**Dec. 15, 2016**

Austin Resource Recovery (ARR) has finalized a six-year contract with Ohio-based for profit company, Simple Recycling, causing many local nonprofits to call for a contract cancellation.

ARR engaged in an unannounced RFP process on their vendor website where Simple Recycling was one of only two bids.

On December 5, the unknown entity in the Central Texas community began providing curbside collections of textiles and household items in Austin—a service that many local nonprofit organizations, including Easterseals, Goodwill and Salvation Army have the capacity to take on.

ARR admitted to making zero attempts to partner with local nonprofits and when asked if this contract would have a negative impact on Central Texas charities, they responded, “no.” However, the contract poses a large threat to several Austin charities benefiting from clothing and household item donations.

Executive leadership and representatives from local charities expressed their concerns and opposition to the contract with Simple Recycling at an information meeting held at the Ruiz Branch, Austin Public Library on December 14. Concerns cited decreases in donations to nonprofits in communities where Simple Recycling is currently providing curbside service. Indianapolis, Houston, Dallas and communities in Ohio are currently taking a hit that Central Texas charities are hoping to avoid.

Tod Marvin, President and CEO of Easterseals Central Texas says local nonprofit organizations have more than enough resources to take on this kind of project and would be eager to work with ARR to accomplish the zero waste goal in a way that will not only protect local charities, but allow the organizations to continue to serve the community.

Local nonprofits and thrift stores are calling on ARR to cancel the contract with Simple Recycling and partner with local nonprofits to create a plan that serves the City of Austin and Central Texas. If ARR continues to say they will not cut ties with Simple Recycling, they are prepared to call on the City Council.

