

**CITY OF SAN ANTONIO  
GOVERNMENT & PUBLIC AFFAIRS DEPARTMENT  
MEMORANDUM**

**TO:** Intergovernmental Relations Council Committee

**FROM:** Jeff Coyle, Director of Government & Public Affairs

**SUBJECT:** 115<sup>th</sup> Congress Federal Legislative Update & SAtoDC Advocacy Visit

**DATE:** January 5, 2018

---

During the January 10 meeting, the Intergovernmental Relations Committee will receive a recap of the first session of the 115<sup>th</sup> Congress and federal legislative advocacy efforts by the City, as well as an outlook on the second session of Congress. The City's Federal legislative consultant, Tom Downs of Downs Government Affairs, will attend the meeting. The Committee will also receive a briefing on the upcoming SAtoDC advocacy visit, including strategy on the City's legislative priorities to take place during the trip.

The 115<sup>th</sup> Congress is comprised of two one-year sessions and the term runs from January 3, 2017 to January 3, 2019.

**115<sup>th</sup> First Session Recap**

Congress concluded their 2017 business on December 20th with the passage of the ***H.R. 1, the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act***. Congress also passed a stopgap bill to keep the federal government funded until January 19 and provides temporary extensions of the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP) through March.

Throughout 2017, the City's Government Affairs team advocated for various programs and issues important to the City and that are part of the City's 115<sup>th</sup> Congress Federal Legislative Program.

The FY 2017 and FY 2018 Appropriations process was a major advocacy focus. Congress passed an omnibus FY 2017 appropriations bill last April. This appropriations bill contains the current funding levels since Congress has not completed the FY 2018 Appropriations and the federal government is being funded with an extension.

Attached is a report which includes a snapshot of FY 2017 key funding levels of interest to the City (listed below), as well as additional details on Federal advocacy efforts by the City.

- Environment & Cultural Resources
- Homeland Security
- Housing
- Public Safety

- Transportation
- Workforce & Economic Development

### **FY 2017 Federal Advocacy Highlights**

The City's Government Affairs team led and supported advocacy efforts for a number of grants, designations and legislative initiatives. The attached report includes details on the following issues:

- Community Oriented Policing Hiring Grant (\$3.125M)
- VIA Metropolitan Transit Grant (\$1.75M)
- America's Promise Job Driven Grant (\$2M)
- Promise Zone Workforce Training Project Grant (\$1.5M)
- Enhanced Collaborative Model to Combat Human Trafficking (\$1.8M)
- Prioritizing World Heritage Sites for Funding
- Promise Zones Coalition
- Opportunity Zones legislation
- Americas Competitiveness Exchange on Innovation and Entrepreneurship (ACE)
- Global Cities Initiative

### **115<sup>th</sup> Second Session Outlook**

On January 3, 2018, the Senate returned to Capitol Hill to begin the second Session of the 115<sup>th</sup> Congress. The House is scheduled to return the week of January 8<sup>th</sup>. It is anticipated that it will be a busy January for Congress as they will aim to pass a long term spending bill for FY 2018 and try to address longer term legislation on DACA, CHIP, and other issues.

**FY 2019 Appropriations** – As stated previously, Congress has not completed an FY 2018 appropriations bill. The current extension expires on January 19. House members returned the week of January 8 and Congress will have approximately a week and a half to finalize a spending package. It has been reported that lawmakers are working toward a potential two-year spending package for the remainder of FY 2018 and FY 2019, but it remains to be seen whether that approach can be negotiated.

The Government Affairs team has initiated discussions with The National League of Cities (NLC) to begin crafting recommendations for an FY 2019 budget. A focus will be to ensure that key city programs funded in FY 2017 remain at the same or increased funding levels.

**Non-stop Flight/Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) Re-Authorization** – Advocacy efforts for the non-stop flight from SAT to DCA will continue in 2018. The current FAA extension expires on March 31<sup>st</sup> and Congress will have to negotiate an additional extension before the deadline. The Government Affairs team identified an alternate vehicle to secure the non-stop

flight and in 2017, efforts were made to include non-stop flight language in the National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA). Additionally, the team worked to secure support of key leaders, including the support of the House Committee on Armed Services Chairman, Rep. Mac Thornberry.

**Transportation Infrastructure** – The National League of Cities (NLC) and the U.S. Conference of Mayors (USCM) are coordinating efforts to launch a 2018 campaign in support for transportation infrastructure legislation to repair and modernize the nation's infrastructure that will benefit cities.

The USCM supports an infrastructure package that includes roads and bridges, along with transit, energy, water, ports, and broadband. Tom Cochran, USCM CEO met with Chairman Bill Shuster in December to initiate this discussion in support of cities. Chairman Shuster expressed his support for a package that recognizes city needs. Furthermore, the Administration has indicated that they will work with Congress to put together a transportation infrastructure proposal in 2018. Transportation infrastructure will be a top cities issue in 2018. The Government Affairs team will continue to work with these organizations and the Delegation to help ensure transportation infrastructure is a priority.

### **SAtoDC 2018**

The SA Chamber's annual SAtoDC advocacy visit is scheduled for January 29 – Feb 1, 2018. For 40 years, the San Antonio Chamber of Commerce has led local leaders to Washington, DC to advocate on federal issues that are pertinent to the San Antonio community. The SA Chamber has partnered with the Free Trade Alliance, the North San Antonio Chamber of Commerce, the San Antonio Hispanic Chamber of Commerce, the South San Antonio Chamber of Commerce, and with the San Antonio Mobility Coalition for the 2018 visit.

The City's Government Affairs team has been actively coordinating with Chamber staff and community partners. There will be a focus placed on key community issues to address with Congressional offices and other leaders during this visit. The main topics are: tax reform, trade, workforce development & housing, cybersecurity, immigration reform and transportation.

Although Government Affairs staff remains in close communication with the Congressional Delegation and federal agencies, the timing of this visit will be critical to continue advocating for many of the issues important to the City and the community as a whole and to set the stage for the 2018 priorities.