



# City of San Antonio

## Agenda Memorandum

**File Number:** 15-2921

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**Agenda Item Number:** 52.

**Agenda Date:** 6/18/2015

**In Control:** City Council A Session

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**DEPARTMENT:** Intergovernmental Relations

**DEPARTMENT HEAD:** Jeff Coyle

**COUNCIL DISTRICTS IMPACTED:** City Wide

**SUBJECT:**

2015-2017 Federal Legislative Program for the 114<sup>th</sup> U.S. Congress

**SUMMARY:**

Ordinance to approve the City of San Antonio's 2015-2017 Federal Legislative Program for the 114<sup>th</sup> Congress, which began January 3, 2015 and extends through January 3, 2017.

**BACKGROUND INFORMATION:**

Development of the City's federal initiatives program began in November 2014 in collaboration with City Departments and the City's Federal Consultant team. The proposed 114<sup>th</sup> Federal Legislative Program focuses on three City legislative priorities and eight funding and policy categories.

The City's Federal Priorities include federal funding and/or legislative support for the following initiatives:

**Federal Courthouse:** The recommendation is support for a multi-prong approach to secure federal funding for construction of a new federal courthouse for the United States District Court for the Western District of Texas, San Antonio Division. In addition to requesting direct appropriations for the project, the strategy will include pursuing public-private partnerships (P3) authority for the General Services Administration (GSA) to be able to engage in (P3) partnerships for construction of the courthouse. Additionally, the strategy includes requesting authority for GSA to be able to utilize funding previously deposited into the Federal Buildings Fund for new construction funding.

**Base Realignment & Closure (BRAC):** In preparation of a possible Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) process, the City will collaborate with Congressional leaders to ensure San Antonio is in the best possible position to withstand or benefit from BRAC.

**Aviation:** This category includes three issues as detailed below.

❖ *San Antonio International Airport to Regan National Airport Non-Stop Flight*

Support efforts for the expansion of the existing perimeter at Regan National Airport to 1,500 miles in upcoming legislation to reauthorize the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA);

❖ *Airport Improvement Program*

Support for legislation that increases Airport Improvement Program (AIP) funding and allows greater flexibility to airports in the use of AIP funds;

❖ *Passenger Facility Charge*

Support for increasing the Passenger Facility Charge (PFC) cap to \$8.50 from the current \$4.50. Passenger Facility Charges (PFC) are collected from every boarded passenger to fund FAA-approved projects that enhance safety, security, or capacity; reduce noise; or increase air carrier competition.

Funding and policy initiatives focus on issues that align with City priorities and enhance the City's continued commitment to leverage national resources and partnerships. The City's federal legislative efforts include the protection of municipal interests for example by insuring the tax exemption status of municipal bonds remain, identification of federal funding to support local investments, and advocacy to ensure that federal resources continue to be available for San Antonio.

The following funding and policy categories are being recommended by IGR, City departments and the City's Federal Consultants. In addition, on March 10, 2015 the Intergovernmental Relations Council Committee voted to support the following funding and policy categories and advance the Federal Legislative Program to full City Council for authorization.

The following list includes new and carry-over issues from the previous Congressional session. New issues are noted.

- **Cybersecurity (*new*):** Advocate for legislation in support of federal funding for cybersecurity-related programs or initiatives through the Department of Defense (DOD), the Dept of Homeland Security (DHS), National Security Agency (NSA) or other departments seeking to secure critical infrastructure, protect consumers, and train and connect a workforce to critical roles in navigating the global cybersecurity landscape.
- **Body Worn Digital Recording Devices (Body Cameras) (*new*):** Advocate for support of funding for Body Worn Digital Recording Devices (Body Cameras).
- **Export-Import Bank:** Support the reauthorization of the Export-Import (Ex-Im) Bank legislation to ensure the competitiveness of San Antonio manufacturers and exporters.
- **Workforce & Training (*new*):** Advocate for funding for education, workforce, and training programs that will build the highly skilled workforce in San Antonio that is crucial for success in the 21st century.
- **Historic Preservation (*new*):** Support Reauthorization of the Historic Preservation Fund and enhancement of the Historic Tax Credit.
- **Municipal Bonds Tax Exemption:** Oppose any changes to the tax-exempt status of municipal bonds.
- **Transportation:** Advocate for transportation funding to help achieve the community goals outlined in SA2020 for San Antonio's transportation system to be recognized as a model of efficiency and environmental sustainability.

- **Urban Areas Security Initiative (UASI):** Support legislation in support of federal funding for the U.S. Department of Homeland Security's (DHS's) Urban Areas Securities Initiative (UASI) and for Regional Fusion Centers.

**ISSUE:**

Congress began the 114<sup>th</sup> session on January 3, 2015. The legislative program seeks to align the City's federal funding priorities for 2015-2017 with Congress and the Administration in an effort to secure the greatest amount of funding.

Adoption of the Federal Legislative Program is in line with Council policy and will not preclude the submission of other initiatives that may be legislative and/or regulatory in nature. As funding opportunities develop further and the possibility of additional grant opportunities develop during the 114<sup>th</sup> Congress, City staff will advise Council accordingly and obtain direction.

**ALTERNATIVES:**

City Council could choose not to adopt a Federal Legislative Program for the 114<sup>th</sup> U.S. Congress. This would be inconsistent with previous public policy set by City Council and fail to provide City Council guidance to staff.

**FISCAL IMPACT:**

There is no direct fiscal impact associated with the approval of this item.

**RECOMMENDATION:**

Staff recommends approval of the City's 114<sup>th</sup> U.S. Congress Federal Legislative Program.