



City of San Antonio

Agenda Memorandum

File Number:19-1412

Agenda Item Number: 6.

Agenda Date: 1/17/2019

In Control: City Council A Session

DEPARTMENT: Government and Public Affairs

DEPARTMENT HEAD: Jeff Coyle

COUNCIL DISTRICTS IMPACTED: City Wide

SUBJECT: Federal Legislative Program for the 116th U.S. Congress

SUMMARY:

An ordinance to approve the City of San Antonio's Federal Legislative Program for the 116th Congress.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

Development of the City of San Antonio's new Federal Program began in September 2018, in collaboration with City Departments and the City's federal consultant team. GPA staff collaborated with the National League of Cities, the U.S. Conference of Mayors, the San Antonio Congressional Delegation and community partners to identify issues important to the San Antonio community. On December 12, 2018, and January 9, 2019, the IGR Committee received briefings on the recommended priorities. The priorities and initiatives included in the proposed Federal Legislative Program were developed with input from the Intergovernmental Relations (IGR) Committee and approved at the January 9 meeting of the IGR Committee.

The Federal Legislative Program is designed to be strategic and impactful, align with the priorities of the San Antonio community and help provide needed city infrastructure. The legislative program will provide direction to Government and Public Affairs (GPA) staff and consultants on the City's federal priorities for 2019-2020. The program guides the City's advocacy activities with members of the San Antonio Congressional Delegation, other key members of Congress and federal agencies.

The proposed Federal Legislative Program is comprised of the following categories: Priorities, Legislative

Priorities

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

- **Military Protection:** Sustain and enhance Joint Base San Antonio's (JBSA) mission readiness, and ensure the long term protection of the region's military bases by helping to preserve, protect and grow military missions and installations in the San Antonio region. Furthermore, sustain and increase P4 and other partnerships with the region's military, and pursue infrastructure funding through the National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) for off base projects.
- **Aviation:** Support Federal Aviation Administration plans to develop alternative funding sources to improve our nation's airport infrastructure and the passenger experience. Support an increase to the Airport Improvement Program (AIP) funding and greater flexibility for the use of AIP funds as well as raising or eliminating the Passenger Facility Charge (PFC) cap of \$4.50. Support Congressional changes to the Washington Reagan National Airport (DCA) Perimeter Rule and Slot Rule in order to secure a nonstop flight from San Antonio International Airport (SAT) to DCA.
- **Transportation Infrastructure:** Support the city's multimodal transportation plan to help meet the community's transportation goals by identifying new funding sources and advocating for funding increases in key programs, such as the reauthorization of the Fixing America's Surface Transportation (FAST) Act and other key transit and surface transportation grant programs, such as INFRA, TIGER and FASTLANE.
- **Housing:** Support the enhancement and expansion of San Antonio's affordable housing programs and services by identifying funding sources and advocating for funding increases to programs such as the Home Investment Partnership Program (HOME), the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) and other affordable housing programs.

Legislative and Agency Initiatives

Legislative and agency initiatives focus on issues that align with City priorities and enhance the City's commitment to leverage national resources and partnerships. Efforts include the protection of municipal interests, identification of funding to support local investments, and advocacy to ensure federal resources continue to be available for San Antonio.

- **Public Safety Enhancements:** Support full and expanded funding dedicated to supporting state and local law enforcement and public safety, such as Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS) and Byrne Justice Assistance Grant programs.
- **Emergency Preparedness/Homeland Security:** Support programs and increased funding to promote a multi-jurisdictional, multi-disciplinary approach to regional prevention, preparedness, response, recovery and resiliency from a terrorist attack or natural disaster.
- **Workforce and Training:** Support the reauthorization and funding for workforce, education and

training programs for youth, adults and veterans that will help build a highly skilled workforce in San Antonio.

- **Work Opportunity Tax Credits/Employment Tax Credits:** Support the extension and expansion of tax credits for businesses that hire vulnerable populations in economically distressed areas.
- **Historic Tax Credit (HTC) Enhancements:** Support HTC enhancements that help make historic tax credits more attractive to investors and restore the value lost by requiring it be taken over 5 years.
- **Deferred Action of Childhood Arrivals:** Support congressional action that enables undocumented immigrants who came to the U.S. as children to earn lawful status.
- **Public Charge Rule:** Urge the Department of Homeland Security and Congress not to include participation in the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP) or Medicaid in the list of enumerated benefits that would weigh against an intending immigrant as related to the proposed Public Charge Rule. These health programs provide valuable coverage for our most vulnerable populations, including pregnant women.
- **Anti-trafficking/smuggling:** Support programs and funding for anti-trafficking and anti-smuggling programs.
- **Domestic Violence Prevention & Services:** Support policies and programs to prevent domestic violence. Support funding for prevention education and intervention services to effectively address this issue in our community.
- **Substance Abuse Prevention & Services:** Support policies and programs to curtail the use and abuse of dangerous substances in our community. Support funding for prevention education and treatment programs to effectively address this issue in our community.
- **Homeless Prevention and Services:** Support programs and resources to develop an effective system for chronically homeless individuals, and especially those who suffer from addiction and mental illness.
- **San Antonio Missions National Park Funding:** Support a federal funding increase for operations and maintenance of the San Antonio Missions National Historical Park.
- **Air Quality:** Support policies, programs and funding for marginal nonattainment areas to reach and maintain attainment before additional regulations are necessary under a moderate classification and

allow marginal nonattainment areas to have five years to reach attainment in order to provide an adequate period of time to comply before more regulations are enforced.

- **Brownfields:** Support funding for the Brownfields Program in the areas of assessment, clean-up and technical assistance from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency to assist City redevelopment.

Protection of Municipal Interests

Support federal regulations or legislation which would clearly benefit the City and community and oppose any regulations or legislation that would clearly be adverse to the City's and community's interests.

Partnerships

Endorse issues of importance to community partners, such as business, higher education and nonprofit organization partners.

ISSUE:

A new session of Congress began on January 3, 2019. The legislative program establishes the City's federal priorities and initiatives for 2019-2020.

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 116th Congress, City staff will advise Council accordingly and obtain direction.

ALTERNATIVES:

City Council could choose not to adopt a Federal Legislative Program for the 116th U.S. Congress. This would be inconsistent with previous public policy set by City Council and fail to provide timely City Council guidance to staff. Council could alternatively provide direction on an issue by issue basis throughout the two year Congressional period.

FISCAL IMPACT:

There is no direct fiscal impact associated with the approval of this item. The City seeks funding that will support the city's growing needs associated with the significant population growth expected over the next 25 years.

RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends approval of the City's 116th Congress Federal Legislative Program.