



# City of San Antonio

## Agenda Memorandum

**File Number:**19-6125

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**Agenda Item Number:** 2.

**Agenda Date:** 8/21/2019

**In Control:** Intergovernmental Relations Committee

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**DEPARTMENT:** Government & Public Affairs, Office of Military and Veteran Affairs

**DEPARTMENT HEAD:** Jeff Coyle, Juan G. Ayala

**COUNCIL DISTRICTS IMPACTED:** City Wide

**SUBJECT:** Hiring Our Heroes Memorandum of Understanding

### **SUMMARY:**

The Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) will establish a two-year, formal agreement between the United States Chamber of Commerce's Hiring Our Heroes Corporate Fellowship Program and the City of San Antonio. The MOU will specifically direct how the \$150,000 currently budgeted towards military spouse employment will be spent.

### **BACKGROUND:**

As part of San Antonio's ongoing efforts to support the military, the City Council budgeted \$150,000 in the FY 19 budget to support employment opportunities for spouses of active duty military members. The Office of Military and Veteran Affairs (OMVA) was tasked with exploring community needs in this area and make a recommendation as to how most effectively implement the funding.

To capture best practices from the community, OMVA consulted with a number of Veteran Support Organizations (VSO), including the USO, Good Samaritan Veterans Outreach and Transition Center, Wounded Warrior Project and the Bexar County Military and Veterans Services Center. OMVA also consulted with members of City Council, to include former Councilman Greg Brockhouse and District 10 Councilman Clayton Perry who is a Military Transformation Task Force Tri-Chair. In addition, OMVA also consulted with the City's Human Resources Department and the City Attorney's Office.

After this extensive review, OMVA concluded that partnering with the United States Chamber of Commerce Foundation's Hiring our Heroes (HOH) Military Spouse Program will result is the most effective use of City funds and provide the needed support to military spouses.

This HOH program is an initiative of the U.S. Chamber of Commerce Foundation dedicated to measurably impacting military spouse employment and underemployment. HOH's goal is to advance the narrative across America regarding the value of military spouses in the workplace and to connect military spouses with continuous and meaningful employment opportunities.

OMVA selected this program for a number of reasons to include HOH's successes in other U.S. states and their national marketing campaign. The campaign seeks to dispel any negative connotations associated with hiring military spouses and educate employers regarding most military spouses' strong work ethic, high education levels, and extensive experience working with diverse groups of people.

**ISSUE:**

This item continues City Council policy to support JBSA's military missions and position the City to keep and expand military missions. The three Service Secretaries have addressed family support as a significant factor for future basing decisions [i.e. Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC)]. There is a direct correlation between military spouse employment and the readiness and retention of active duty members. The lack of employment opportunities for a spouse affects a family's decision to stay or leave the military, and spouse career opportunities are one of the top factors for determining military retention.

This MOU outlines the relationship and requirements between the City of San Antonio and HOH and supports City Council policy.

**ALTERNATIVES:**

An alternative to accepting this MOU is to revise the terms of the agreement or seek another partner to support military spouse employment; either action would delay the start of the project.

**FISCAL IMPACT:**

The MOU is for an amount of \$150,000 for a two-year agreement; funds were previously approved and budgeted. If the initiative is successful (approximately 80% of fellows are hired) additional funds may be requested to continue and expand the program, any additional expenditures will be separately approved by Council.

**RECOMMENDATION:**

Staff recommends full City Council consideration of the MOU with the United States Chamber of Commerce Foundation for a Hiring Our Heroes Corporate Fellowship Program.