



City of San Antonio

Agenda Memorandum

File Number:19-7140

Agenda Item Number: 24.

Agenda Date: 10/3/2019

In Control: City Council A Session

DEPARTMENT: Government & Public Affairs

DEPARTMENT HEAD: Jeff Coyle

COUNCIL DISTRICTS IMPACTED: Citywide

SUBJECT: 116th Congress Federal Legislative Program Amendments

SUMMARY:

This item includes two proposed amendments to the City of San Antonio's 116th U.S. Congress Federal Legislative Program related to domestic violence prevention and gun violence prevention. The amendments were approved by the Intergovernmental Relations Council Committee and are consistent with resolutions previously approved by the City Council.

BACKGROUND:

Development of the City of San Antonio's federal initiatives for the 116th Congress began in September 2018 in collaboration with City Departments, national organizations, community partners, and the City's federal consultant team. The federal legislative program guides the City's advocacy activities and is comprised of the following categories: Priorities, Legislative Issues, Agency Initiatives, Protection of Municipals Interests, and Partnerships.

The City's federal priorities include federal funding and/or legislative action in relation to military protection, aviation, transportation infrastructure, and housing. Legislative and agency initiatives included in the 116th Program focus on issues that align with City priorities and enhance the City's commitment to leverage national resources and partnerships. The City's federal legislative efforts include the protection of municipal interests, identification of federal funding to support local investments, and advocacy to ensure that federal resources continue to be available for San Antonio.

In 2018 the City Council approved a resolution on Women's Equity, reaffirming the commitment of the City to improve the status of women in part by eliminating all forms of violence against women. The City commissioned a report on the status of women to reaffirm the commitment to improve the status of women in the community and help develop a comprehensive plan to deal with domestic violence. The report showed that

modest gains have been made in the areas of education and closing the earnings gap but the report also measured an increase in violence against women between 2012 and 2017. The City Council Governance and Intergovernmental Relations committees requested that the issue of domestic violence prevention and services be elevated to a priority in the City's federal legislative program.

In August of 2019 the City Council approved a resolution calling for the Texas legislature and U.S. Congress take action to address gun violence across the country. Council's action was in response to two consecutive mass shooting on August 3rd and 4th in El Paso, TX and Dayton, OH, respectively, and the more than 39,000 lives lost to firearms on an annual basis. As directed by the City Council, the City Manager sent the resolution to the Texas Governor, Lieutenant Governor, Speaker of the House, the entire Bexar County state and federal legislative delegations, the Texas Municipal League and all Texas cities with a population greater than 500,000. The City Council Governance and IGR committees requested that support for firearms safety legislation be added to the federal legislative program.

ISSUE:

Staff proposes amending the 116th Federal Legislative program to include support for policies, legislation, programs and funding relating to domestic violence prevention and gun safety. The recommended changes are in line with the policy priorities of the City Council as expressed in the resolutions on women's equity and reducing gun violence. Amendments to legislative programs to address developing issues and new areas of focus are also in line with regular council practice. The proposed amendment language is:

- **DOMESTIC VIOLENCE PREVENTION & SERVICES** - *Support policies and programs to prevent domestic violence. Furthermore, support funding for prevention education and intervention services to effectively address this issue in our community.*
- **FIREARMS SAFETY** - *Support comprehensive legislation to prevent gun violence, including policies that require background checks for gun sales.*

ALTERNATIVES:

City Council could modify the amendment language or could choose to not accept the recommended amendments. Should Council decide to deny the recommended amendments City staff would continue to advocate under the framework of the issues in the current federal program.

FISCAL IMPACT:

There is no direct fiscal impact associated with this item.

RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends adoption of the proposed federal legislative program amendments.