

RESOLUTION NO. 040325-32

WHEREAS, the City established Brackenridge and Children's Hospitals, which became the foundation for trauma care and children's care in Travis County and surrounding counties; and

WHEREAS, the City and Travis County have for many years invested funds to provide residents with access to hospital and certain other health care services, both through Brackenridge and Children's Hospitals and through a system of clinics and medical assistance programs; and

WHEREAS, ever tighter budget constraints at the federal and state level require local communities to shoulder more of the burden of supporting trauma centers and providing adequate access to health care services for all residents; and

WHEREAS, the current structure unfairly burdens those Travis County taxpayers who live in the City, and such unfairness will significantly impair the ability of the community to preserve access to quality trauma and other hospital and health care services;

WHEREAS, citizens of the City and Travis County formed a community wide steering committee in 2002 to consider alternative methods of ensuring the continued viability of Brackenridge Hospital as a regional trauma center and access to health care services for residents of Austin and Travis County, including the possibility of creating a hospital/health care district for Travis County and possibly for other counties in Central Texas; and

WHEREAS, the community steering committee reached the conclusion that it is important to have a single, county-wide government entity responsible for the provision of health care as the public component of the public-private health care delivery system, including having a single taxing jurisdiction that is county-wide; and

WHEREAS, in 2003 the Texas Legislature amended state law to authorize a hospital district that meets the special needs of the City and Travis County; and

WHEREAS, a valid petition of voters calling for a hospital district election has been presented to the Travis County Commissioners Court; and

WHEREAS, the Travis County Commissioners Court has called an election to consider the creation of a hospital district in Travis County for May 15, 2004; and

WHEREAS, the City shall reduce the ad valorem tax rate adopted for the City to reflect the amount of the decrease spent for health care purposes that will be assumed by the hospital district as required by state law; and

WHEREAS, the City of Austin has evaluated the creation of a hospital district and determined that it is a necessary step to meet the challenge of decreased federal and state support, to ensure a viable regional trauma center in Austin, to support the community's pediatric care, and to provide access for residents of the City of Austin and Travis County to hospital and medical services, which is important to the area's employers and economic growth;

NOW, THEREFORE,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF AUSTIN:

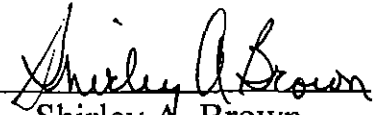
The City Council supports the election in May for the residents of Travis County to vote on a Travis County hospital district; and

The City Council directs the City Manager to have the City's independent auditor verify that the ad valorem tax rate of the City reflects the reduced health care spending that will be assumed by the hospital district as required by state law; and

The City Council supports the creation of a Travis County hospital district for the reasons stated above.

ADOPTED: March 25, 2004

ATTEST:


Shirley A. Brown
City Clerk