



RECOMMENDATION

Commission on Seniors

Recommendation Number: (20210210-03B) Support for Austin's Legislative Agenda and Advocacy

WHEREAS, the City of Austin's greatest asset is its people who are passionate about their city, committed to its improvement, and determined to see its vision become a reality; and

WHEREAS, the percent of registered voters who voted in the past 4 years of city elections exceeded 60 percent; and

WHEREAS, an overwhelming majority of registered voters who live in Austin voted for the current Austin City Council representation; and

WHEREAS, over 700 Austinites participate and serve on over 60 Boards and Commissions to help shape, and continually improve upon the policies of the City and the lives of its residents; and

WHEREAS, the input provided to the Austin City Council through the City's Boards and Commissions reflects the will of the community; and

WHEREAS, it is the intent of the City of Austin that the legislative agenda guide City staff, in coordination with the City's strategic partners, in their efforts to advocate on behalf of the City of Austin and its residents; and

WHEREAS, each year, the Texas Legislature increasingly attempts to pass legislation that negatively impacts the City through preemption or limiting the ability to advocate; and

WHEREAS, the 2019 Legislature strongly considered and almost passed S.B. 29 which would have limited the ability of the City to utilize community advocates to effectively advocate on behalf of the policies created and supported by its residents; and

WHEREAS, taxpayers and City residents benefit from and need community advocates as a tool that amplifies their voices before the Legislature, Congress, and regulatory bodies; and

WHEREAS, a prohibition on community advocacy equates to censorship of Residents' voices and is detrimental to a representative democracy where all Austinites and Texans have equal opportunities to voice their opinions.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED the Commission on Seniors:

- Endorses the City of Austin's 2020 Legislative Agenda adopted by the Austin City Council on September 17th, 2020.

- Believes the general principals of the policy and position statements contained in the City of Austin’s state legislative agenda capture the positions of its membership and the community it represents.
- Urges all Austin delegation members of the Texas Legislature to protect the City’s right to effectively represent the taxpayers and continue to amplify their collective voices through advocacy at the Texas Legislature.
- Supports the City of Austin’s engagement of and funding for a community advocacy team to assist the City in advocating for and protecting Austin’s vision and position at the Texas Legislature.

Date of Approval: February 10th, 2021

Record of the vote: 13-0-1

For: Briesemeister, Varteressian, Angel, Garcia-Pittman, Grampp, Hauser, Jackson, Kareithi, Lugo, Nicola, Spain, Temperley, Van Sickle

Against: None

Abstain: Bordie

Absent: Cagle

Attest: 

Janee Briesemeister, Chair