



**COMMISSION FOR WOMEN RECOMMENDATION 20220302-02d: Recommendations
for Women Affected by SB8**

Date: March 2, 2022

Subject: Women Affected by SB8

Motioned By: Rebecca Austen

Seconded By: Josephine Serrata

Recommendation to Council

WHEREAS, the Commission for Women (“Commission”) of the City of Austin (“City”) serves as an advisory body that advocates for and inspires the City Council (“Council”) and City Manager to prioritize women’s quality of life, so that Austin becomes the most equitable city in the nation for women and girls; and

WHEREAS, Senate Bill 8 became law on September 1, 2021, essentially banning abortions after six weeks gestation and allowing private citizens to sue abortion providers. Historically, roughly 85% of abortions in Texas take place after six weeks gestations; and

WHEREAS, there are nearly 7 million women of reproductive age in Texas, and The Texas Policy Evaluation Project estimates the law means only 16% of Texans seeking abortions will be able to access them in-state, and as many of 46% of people seeking abortions in Texans will carry their pregnancies to term against their will; and

WHEREAS, a report from the Guttmacher Institute, Texas patients will now have to travel 20 times farther to get an abortion — increasing driving times an average of 3.5 hours each way. Already, people who struggle to make ends meet are often forced to delay abortion services because they need time to secure the funds. They are also less able to travel out of state to get the care they need; and

WHEREAS, in Texas, like many states, a legacy of systemic racism has trapped Black women and Latinas in poverty at disproportionately high rates, and they likely will be most harmed by this ban;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, the Commission for Women recommends for the FY2022-2023 budget:

The City of Austin should allocate funding to help buffer the impact of SB8 for Austin birthing individuals.

1. Funding should be allocated to Austin health centers that offer reproductive healthcare and who are now taking on additional and unplanned resources in the aftermath of the passing of SB8 in 2021.
2. Funding should be allocated to provide legal resources to support the current lawsuits that challenge SB8.
3. Funding should be allocated to provide practical support to help people travel to other states for abortion care.
4. Funding to help women seeking prenatal care and healthcare options for those that choose to continue their pregnancy.

Date of Approval: March 2, 2022

Record of the vote: Passed on a 6-1 vote, with Chair Austen, Vice Chair Bope, Commissioners Bissereth, Gonzales, Melendez, and Serrata in favor; Commissioner Rattan against; and two commissioners absent.

Attest: Jonathan Babiak
Jonathan Babiak, Staff Liaison