

RESOLUTION NO. 20220721-003

WHEREAS, the City has declared that access to health care services is a basic human right; and

WHEREAS, the City has consistently supported the rights of reproductive health and family planning; and

WHEREAS, the City supports gender equity, and Council has passed Resolution No. 20170323-054, which states that it is the goal of the City to eliminate any “distinction, exclusion, or restriction made on the basis of sex which has the effect or purpose of impairing or nullifying the recognition, enjoyment or exercise by women, irrespective of marital status, on the basis of equality between men and women, of human rights or fundamental freedom in the political, economic, social, cultural, civil, or any other field;” and

WHEREAS, responsibility for preventing pregnancy in cisgender heterosexual relationships disproportionately falls on women, including the associated time, attention, stress, and emotional and mental work, according to an article titled, “More than a Physical Burden: Women’s Emotional and Mental Work in Preventing Pregnancy,” published in 2019; and

WHEREAS, generally, men and those with sperm cells are able to produce more children than women and those with egg cells in their lifespan; and

WHEREAS, this gender inequity and inequality is reinforced and normalized, sometimes unintentionally, with how our society often initially responds to the need for family planning practices and services; and,

WHEREAS, in 2010, publicly funded family planning prevented millions of unwanted pregnancies, and thousands of other reproductive and sexual health complications, according to an article titled, “Return on Investment: A Fuller

Assessment of the Benefits and Cost Savings of the U.S. Publicly Funded Family Planning Program,” published in Milbank Quarterly; and

WHEREAS, vasectomies are one of the most successful effective and cost efficient forms of birth control; and

WHEREAS, vasectomies are 95 percent reversible; and

WHEREAS, community and patient education, as well as financial resources, could increase access to vasectomies for those who do not want a child, or more children, as cited in the article titled “Barriers to Offering Vasectomy at Publicly Funded Family Planning Organizations in Texas,” published in the 2017 American Journal of Men’s Health; and

WHEREAS, communities in Texas have begun to pilot broad family planning and birth control assistance, including the City of Laredo, which made a low-cost vasectomy program permanent after its early successes; and

WHEREAS, the National Institute for Reproductive Health lists positive public awareness campaigns on sexual and reproductive health in its proactive policy agenda, on the section of its website titled Policy Agenda for Cities; **NOW, THEREFORE**,

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

The City establishes equitable access to contraception as essential to family planning, reproductive freedom, and public health.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:

The City Manager is directed to explore the City’s ability to conduct a public education program on long-term birth control, including but not limited to vasectomies, which should include community health partners.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:

The City Manager should report back to Council with a plan for executing this public education program no later than September 30, 2022.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:

The City Manager is directed to ensure that health insurance offered to City employees and their spouses cover low-cost birth control, including but not limited to vasectomies.

ADOPTED: July 21, 2022

ATTEST:


Myrna Rios
City Clerk