

RECOMMENDATION
COMMISSION ON IMMIGRANT AFFAIRS
20140220-005C
Regarding CAPCOG Emergency Notification System

WHEREAS, the City of Austin and Travis County have significant diverse immigrant populations and welcome them in our city and county; and

WHEREAS, according to the 2010 U.S. Census approximately 18% of residents are foreign-born; and

WHEREAS immigrants comprise a vital part of our local workforce and approximately one-third (150,006) of the local labor force is made up of individuals who speak a language other than English at home; and

WHEREAS, according to the September 2013 study by the Pew Internet and American Life Project, nearly a quarter of adults in households making less than \$30,000 per year do not use the Internet; and

WHEREAS the City of Austin and Travis County are committed to the public safety of all residents regardless of race, color, sex, religion, national origin, age, and physical or mental disability; and

WHEREAS, a system of Regional Notification System (RNS) alerts has been implemented to notify the public of a critical emergency; and

WHEREAS, only residents who have traditional landlines are automatically captured when a notification is sent out, and a resident relying solely on a cell phone must register that cell number to receive alerts via a website;

THEREFORE, be it:

RECOMMENDED, That the City of Austin direct CAPCOG to create an on-phone registration system for the Regional Notification System in several commonly-spoken languages other than English, thus making it more accessible to foreign-born and/or non-English/Spanish speaking residents.

RECOMMENDED, That the existing website be translated into Spanish and other additional languages, including but not limited to Vietnamese, Chinese, French and Korean.

RECOMMENDED, That the City of Austin conduct a public information campaign and community workshops in multiple languages besides English/Spanish to raise awareness regarding the need and how to register.

PASSED by the Commission on Immigrant Affairs on February 20, 2014.

Unanimously approved by the Commission on Immigrant Affairs on a 4-0 vote with Commissioners Sandra Molinari and Nancy Lira absent.

Attest:

Connie H. Gonzales, Staff Liaison