

Resolution No. _____

WHEREAS, the City of Austin is a community that values inclusivity and recognizes the immense economic, social, and cultural contributions that people of all national origins and immigration statuses have made to this country; and

WHEREAS, nearly 1 in 5 members of the Austin community were born outside of the United States and are our neighbors, family, and colleagues, and it is essential to the public good that they be safe, stable, and secure; and

WHEREAS, City Council declared Austin a Welcoming City through Resolution 20140320-049 to celebrate the contributions of members of the immigrant community and demonstrate that the City strives to include immigrants in all aspects of our city; and

WHEREAS, the availability of legal services for members of the immigrant community helps survivors of domestic violence and human trafficking live safe, happy, and productive lives; and

WHEREAS, the availability of legal services for members of the immigrant community helps people receive asylum in the United States when they are facing persecution or torture in their home countries for reasons such as their race, religion, political opinion, gender, or sexual orientation; and

WHEREAS, the availability of legal services for members of the immigrant community reunites families and helps many people received U.S. citizenship; and

WHEREAS, market rate legal services are unaffordable to many families, even those above the federal poverty limit, so many must rely on nonprofit service providers; and

WHEREAS, local nonprofit providers of immigration legal services have witnessed a recent surge in demand; and

WHEREAS, prospective harshening of federal immigration policy may result in an increasingly urgent need for legal services within the immigrant community; now therefore

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF AUSTIN:

City Council directs the City Manager to work with City departments to identify emergency funding for immigrant legal services and outreach with a goal of assisting with the cases of 100 additional Austinites per month than are currently being served, for the remainder of FY16-17.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:

City Council directs the City Manager to bring back recommendations for Council action or budget amendments by the January 26, 2017 Council Meeting, and to strongly consider expanding existing contracts that could best perform these services as soon as possible.

ADOPTED: _____, 2016

ATTEST: _____

Jannette S. Goodall
City Clerk