



**JOINT INCLUSION COMMITTEE (JIC)
FY23-2024 BUDGET RECOMMENDATION 20230322-010
PUBLIC SAFETY PRIORITY – IMMIGRANT LEGAL SERVICES**

Date: March 22, 2023

Subject: Joint Endorsement of the Asian American Quality-of-Life Advisory Commission's FY23-24 Budget Recommendation 20230321-007: Immigrant Legal Services (JIC Public Safety Priority)

Motioned by: Commissioner Rebecca Austen Seconded By: Commissioner Amy Temperley

ASIAN AMERICAN QUALITY-OF-LIFE ADISORY COMMISSION RECOMMENDATION 20230321-007

JOINTLY ENDORSED RECOMMENDATION TO COUNCIL ON FY23-2024 BUDGET

The Joint Inclusion Committee (JIC) collectively endorses the Asian American Quality-of-Life Advisory Commission's recommendation that Austin City Council provide on-going funding for immigrant legal services.

Travis County is experiencing an urgent need for immigrant legal services for low-income immigrants. The latest US Census data shows that 17.8% of the total population of Travis County is foreign born. Many of these individuals are low-income and do not have full legal status. Stress, fear, and heightened anxiety are constant companions for those in the immigrant community without legal status. Anxiety regarding deportation, family separation, and securing gainful employment are widespread concerns.

Although many of these immigrants have a pathway to legal immigration status, they do not have the ability to secure it. Navigating a complex and opaque immigration system to secure legal status is often impossible without legal assistance and is cost-prohibitive to many low-income Austin/Travis County residents.

Funding is needed to provide dedicated immigrant legal services to low-income Asian immigrants and others in Austin to address the large number of individuals seeking services for deportation defense and consultations. The immigrant Asian population in Austin is diverse and has specific language access needs, and, without additional funding, low-income individuals will not be able to access the protection and services they need.

The city's FY 2022-23 budget included one-time Budget Stabilization Reserve Funds in the amount of \$250,000. The Commission respectfully recommends that \$250,000 be included in the FY 2023-24 budget on an on-going basis.

Cost is \$250,000 ongoing.

DEPARTMENT

Austin Public Health

ALIGNMENT WITH COUNCIL STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

Safety: Fair administration of justice

ROLL CALL VOTE: 7 – 0

For: African American Resource Advisory Commission: Gregory Smith
Commission for Women: Rebecca Austen
Commission on Aging: Amy Temperley
Early Childhood Council: Raul Alvarez
Hispanic/Latino Quality-of-Life-Resource Advisory Commission: Amanda Afifi
LGBTQ+ Quality-of-Life Advisory Commission: Charles Curry
Mayor’s Committee for People with Disabilities: Jennifer Powell

Against: None.

Abstain: None.

Absent: Commission on Immigrant Affairs: Juan Vences-Benitez
Human Rights Commission: Idonna Griffith
Asian American Quality-of-Life Advisory Commission: Hanna Huang

Attest: Jeremy Garza, Staff Liaison, Equity Office:

x Jeremy Garza