



**JOINT INCLUSION COMMITTEE (JIC)
FY23-2024 BUDGET RECOMMENDATION 20230322-026
AFFORDABILITY PRIORITY – EXPAND MBWE TO INCLUDE DISABILITY**

Date: March 22, 2023

Subject: Joint Endorsement of the Mayor’s Committee for People with Disabilities’
FY23-24 Budget Recommendation 20230310-5: Amend and Expand the
MBWE Program to Include Disability (JIC Affordability Priority)

Motioned by: Commissioner Jennifer Powell Seconded By: Commissioner Gregory Smith

MAYOR’S COMMITTEE FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITES RECOMMENDATION 20230310-5:

JOINTLY ENDORSED RECOMMENDATION TO COUNCIL ON FY23-2024 BUDGET

WHEREAS, the City of Austin wants to encourage minority-owned small business enterprise participation; and

WHEREAS, the City of Austin headquarters the Texas School for the Deaf, and is the largest school specifically for Deaf people in the State of Texas; and

WHEREAS, the Service Disabled Veteran program previously launched on October 1, 2017 is explicitly restricted to program participation of only those business owners who received disability specifically as a result of having served in the United States Military, and therefore systematically excludes business owners who have had disabilities either since birth, or acquired disabilities after discharge from military service; and

WHEREAS, The City of Austin has a vibrant local Deaf culture including 61 locally- owned businesses which are currently both owned and operated by Deaf individuals; and

WHEREAS, several of these Deaf-owned businesses proactively and independently formed an Austin, Texas-based Deaf Chamber of Commerce with 13 active members, and

WHEREAS, current Federal eligibility evaluation criteria from the Small Business

Administration does encourage disability to be publicly recognized as a category in the “Small Disadvantaged Business” programs; and

WHEREAS, the cities of Houston, Philadelphia, and Boston already explicitly mention “disability” in their respective MBWE program eligibility criteria, operations, and publication;

WHEREAS, local business owners with disabilities in Austin, Texas do not receive similar inclusion, participation and related benefits from the pre-existing City of Austin MBWE program; and

WHEREAS, local business owners with disabilities in Austin Texas have the right to expect full inclusion and participation, and benefits from all existing City of Austin, Texas programs;

WHEREAS, excluding local business owners with disabilities from full access, inclusion, participation, and benefits of City of Austin, Texas MBWE program criteria and operations is neither inclusion nor equity; and

WHEREAS, The City of Austin, Texas MBWE program and City of Austin itself is funded with public monies including from these local business owners with disabilities who do have the right to expect full and equitable access within existing City of Austin programs; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED the Joint Inclusion Committee collectively endorses the Mayor’s Committee for People with Disabilities recommendation that the existing City of Austin MBWE program is amended and expanded to explicitly include disability as a category in all eligibility, program operations, and publications;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVE, all MBWE program staff must undergo required annual comprehensive anti-ableism/anti-audism training to understand that ableism and audism undercut the achievement of equity in Austin, Texas;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, successfully completing this required annual comprehensive anti- ableism/anti-audism training helps all MBWE program staff effectively create and sustain an inclusive and equitable Austin, Texas for small business owners and prospective small business owners with disabilities;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the Austin City Council pass a concurrent resolution apologizing for having previously excluded taxpayers with disabilities and/or Deafness from full inclusion and participation in existing small, disadvantaged business programs.

ROLL CALL VOTE: 8 – 0

For: African American Resource Advisory Commission: Gregory Smith
Asian American Quality-of-Life Advisory Commission: Hanna Huang
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

Attest: Jeremy Garza, Staff Liaison, Equity Office:

x Jeremy Garza