



**HISPANIC/LATINO QUALITY OF LIFE RESOURCE ADVISORY COMMISSION
RECOMMENDATION 20240326-5**

Immigrant Legal Services

Date: March 26, 2024

Subject: FY25 Budget Recommendations

Motioned By: Commissioner Vargas

Seconded By: Commissioner Galvan

We continue to hear from the community concerns regarding underfunding of immigration legal services. Only a small number of individuals are served with the current funding. There are very few organizations in Austin that have the ability to provide legal services to our immigrant communities pro bono. One of the service providers is American Gateways. They are currently only able to meet 25% of the need. The need for legal services continues to expand due to the complicated immigration legal system.

WHEREAS, we continue to hear from the community that legal services funding is crucial; and

WHEREAS, there are immigrants who need access to counsel, and cannot afford attorneys. This is especially so for immigrants facing removal proceedings; and

WHEREAS, in a time of changes in immigration policy, people have more need for legal representation, as it has become very complicated; and

WHEREAS, it is essential that immigrant communities obtain accurate advice and assistance; and

WHEREAS, the people most impacted by the complicated changes in immigration policy are low-income immigrants; and

WHEREAS, the City of Austin funds legal services for low income immigrants who are Austin residents, and there is still unmet need;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Hispanic Latino Quality of Life recommends funding of \$700,000 to continue services currently being provided along with a suggested \$150,000 increase to meet community legal needs from the closure of nonprofits serving refugees in our community.

Vote: 7-0

For: Commissioner Silva, Commissioner Afifi, Commissioner Vargas, Commissioner Perales, Commissioner Castañeda, Commissioner Galvan, Commissioner Jackson Jr.

Against: None

Abstain: None

Absent: Commissioner Neri, Commissioner May, Commissioner Maldonado

Attest:

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Amanda Afifi". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Amanda Afifi, Chair