

Accessible Housing Austin!
AGE of Central Texas
AIDS Services of Austin
American Gateways
American Heart Association Capital Area Division
American YouthWorks
Any Baby Can
The Arc of the Capital Area
Asian Family Support Services of Austin
Austin Achieve Public Schools
Austin Area Urban League
Austin Child Guidance Center
Austin Children's Services
Austin Free-Net
Austin Speech Labs
Austin Travis County Integral Care
Autism Society of Central Texas
AVANCE – Austin
BookSpring
Boys & Girls Clubs of the Austin Area
Breast Cancer Resource Centers of TX
Capital Area Food Bank
Capital City Village
Capital IDEA
The Care Communities
Caritas of Austin
CASA of Travis County
Catholic Charities of Central Texas
Center for Child Protection
Center for Survivors of Torture
Child Inc.
The Christi Center
College Houses
ColorCancer
Communities In Schools of Central TX
CommUnityCare
Council on At-Risk Youth
The Council on Recovery
Easter Seals Central TX
Ending Community Homelessness Coalition
El Buen Samaritano Episcopal Mission
Extend-A-Care for Kids
Family Eldercare
Foundation Communities
Foundation for the Homeless
Front Steps
Goodwill Industries of Central TX
H.A.N.D.
HealthStart Foundation
Interfaith Action of Central Texas
Jeremiah Program
Jewish Family Service of Austin
LifeWorks
Literacy Coalition of Central TX
Marathon Kids
Meals on Wheels and More
Mis Cuentas
NAMI Austin
Open Door Preschool
Partnerships for Children
People's Community Clinic
Ronald McDonald House Charities
Round Rock Area Serving Center
The SAFE Alliance
SafePlace
Saint Louise House
Salvation Army – Austin Metro Area Command
Samaritan Center
Seedling Foundation
Seton Cove
The Settlement Home for Children
Sickle Cell Association Marc Thomas Foundation
Society of St. Vincent de Paul – Diocesan Council of Austin
Southwest Key Programs, Inc.
Spirit Reins
Sustainable Food Center
Texas Homeless Network
Trinity Center
Upbring
Vela Families
Volunteer Healthcare Clinic
Waterloo Counseling Center
Wonders & Worries
YMCA of Austin
[Affiliate Members](#)
Capital Metro
SIMS Foundation
Texas Association of Charitable Clinics
Texas Partnership for Out of School Time

ONE VOICE

CENTRAL TEXAS

To: The Honorable Mayor Steve Adler
Kathie Tovo, Mayor Pro Tem
Ora Houston, Council Member
Delia Garza, Council Member
Sabino Renteria, Council Member
Greg Casar, Council Member
Ann Kitchen, Council Member
Don Zimmerman, Council Member
Leslie Pool, Council Member
Ellen Troxclair, Council Member
Sheri Gallo, Council Member

Re: Policy Goals related to the City's Investments in Health and Human Services and Social Service Contracts

January 26, 2016

Dear Mayor Adler, Mayor Pro Tem Tovo, and City Council Members,

One Voice Central Texas is a coalition of 89 local health and human service nonprofits that provide effective programs and services to support the wellbeing of all residents to reach their full potential. On behalf of the many individuals that we serve, **we ask for your support of a resolution recommended by the Health and Human Services Committee to amend the 2014 policy goals for Health and Human Services funding to reflect progress in the FY2015-2016 budget process, endorse additional investments in HHS and increase current social service contracts by 3%.**

One Voice appreciates Austin City Council's leadership and commitment to strengthening our community's health and human services infrastructure as demonstrated through the passage of the 2016 budget increases for health and human services. We ask you to continue this commitment by approving a strategic funding policy for health and human services. The proposed resolution would update a budget policy passed in 2014 that sets funding goals for health and human services, determined through months of collaboration and data analysis among City Council members, City staff, and One Voice members. Based on current funding numbers and data analyzed by Council Member Garza, the recommendations in the proposed resolution are as follows:

1. Invest a total of \$11,973,307 of additional funding for social service contracts and \$10,340,870 of additional funding for the Health and Human Services Department budget within 2-4 years in order to catch up

with demand determined by historical data from last two social services RFA processes. Note: While this would guide the budget for Health and Human Services in the coming years, it would not bind Council to these amounts, nor exclude the City from considering larger one-time funding increases to address critical community short-term needs and long-term trends that will inevitably arise moving forward.

2. Provide an annual increase of 3% or more for social services contracts in order to provide stability and address the rising cost of operations for health and human service providers due to personnel and healthcare costs, increased rent, higher costs of materials, etc.

Health and human services are a vital link to creating a safe and sustainable community, however, our community's human services infrastructure is straining from Austin's affordability crisis, and overall funding for social services has not kept up with the demand for services. Since 2000, the poverty rate within Austin has increased 82%, the cost of living has increased, and federal and state resources continue to decline. Following these proposed metrics will help address critical gaps in our social services infrastructure which is strained by the increase in the number of people in poverty.

Support for effective organizations and collaborations is a smart financial decision that produces economic benefits for the whole community. Human services have society-wide impacts – improving population health and the economy and preparing our workforce. Study after study shows that investing in social services saves the community money in both the short and long term. For example, research shows that for every dollar invested, workforce services return \$2.74 over ten years; high-quality pre-kindergarten programs return up to \$17; and substance use treatment returns up to \$4-\$7.

The City has a track record of funding effective programs with proven outcomes. In 2015, 92% of youth receiving intensive in-school services progressed to the next developmental or academic level; 81% of those receiving direct financial assistance achieved stable housing; and 71% of individuals receiving workforce assistance maintained or increased their income. New funding will allow City Council to be flexible in responding to community needs, with opportunities to fund new organizations and services. City Council can strategically invest in effective programs to lay a solid foundation for our community's continued and future wellbeing.

We thank you for your support of social services in the 2016 budget process and look forward to working with you to continue an increased investment in social services in future budget years. We are committed to strengthening the social services fabric and look forward to working with you to do so.

Sincerely,



Ann Howard
2016 Chair, One Voice Central Texas
Executive Director, Ending Community Homelessness Coalition (ECHO)