

Resolution

Adopting the City of Corpus Christi's Federal Legislative Priorities for the 113th U.S. Congress

WHEREAS, the 113th United States Congress convened on January 3, 2013 for two annual sessions and is scheduled to adjourn on January 3, 2015; and

WHEREAS, the City of Corpus Christi and its residents, businesses, industry, governments, agencies and institutions benefit significantly from federal programs and services provided in the community and are greatly impacted by Congressional legislative activities; and

WHEREAS, The City's Intergovernmental Relations (IGR) Department is responsible for monitoring state and federal governmental activities, developing legislative programs approved by City Council, managing the City's legislative consultant, and coordinating legislative activities with other public and private sector entities and municipal advocacy organizations; and

WHEREAS, for about 20 years, the City of Corpus Christi has contracted with Larry Meyers of Meyers and Associates, in Washington, D.C., to assist with monitoring and advocating the City's federal legislative policy agenda; and

WHEREAS, it is necessary to provide guidance for the City's officers and representatives in conducting the City's legislative efforts and relations; and

WHEREAS, to be successful, this ever-evolving business environment requires close contact and constant communication with legislative leadership, external legislative consultants, municipal advocacy organizations, statewide municipal partners, community leadership, and community stakeholders; and

WHEREAS, the City will communicate, collaborate and work supportively with the United States Conference of Mayors, the National League of Cities, the National Community Development Association, the Alliance for Interstate 69 Texas, and any other like-minded municipally-based federal organizations to further mutual goals; and

Now, therefore, be it resolved by the City Council of the City of Corpus Christi, Texas:

SECTION 1. The City Council generally SUPPORTS federal legislation and/or administrative actions that:

- Protect and enhance City revenues;
- Reduce or eliminates costs to the City;

- Furthers local control;
- Protects policies previously established by City leadership through Charter, ordinances, resolutions and master plans; and
- Provides increased educational opportunities and job creation/retention for the citizens of Corpus Christi and the Coastal Bend region through the Port of Corpus Christi authority, public schools, community colleges and universities.

SECTION 2. The City Council generally OPPOSES federal legislation and/or administrative actions that:

- Undermine the principle of home rule and local control by the City;
- Results in the loss of revenue or negatively impacts potential revenue growth to the City;
- Diminishes the authority of cities to regulate and manage their growth and development;
- Nullify or undermine the City's policies contained in existing provisions of the Charter, ordinances, resolutions, and master plans, unless such changes expand the City's ability to manage its own affairs; and
- Imposes unfunded mandates that requires any expenditures by the City unless all costs are fully reimbursed by the mandating governmental entity.

SECTION 3. The City Council's federal legislative priorities for the 113th Congress include:

Tax Policy

- Oppose taxation of the interest earned by investors in bonds issued by municipalities and other local governments.
- Support the Marketplace Fairness Act authorizing state and local governments to collect taxes owed on Internet and mail-order sales.

Housing and Urban Development (HUD)

- Support increases and oppose further reductions in funding for Community Development Block Grants (CDBG), HOME (Home Investment Partnership) program, homeless programs.

Appropriations

- Support continued funding for existing City grant-recipient programs and monitor legislation impacting those programs.
- Encourage Congress to pass annual budgets that prevents cuts required by the Budget Control Act.

Military Installations

- Support funding, staffing, and operations for the strategic missions at military installations in the Coastal Bend.

- Support efforts to enhance missions, operations, and contracting opportunities to increase their military value.
- Support military construction funding as identified by base commanders and personnel.
- Oppose furloughs of military and contract employees forced by federal budget sequestration or government shut-downs.

Transportation Infrastructure & Development

- Support re-authorization of MAP 21, the federal transportation bill for at least five years.
- Support a sustainable source of revenue that will provide for stable funding for investment in transportation infrastructure and transit services.
- Support continued funding through the appropriations process of the Transportation Investment for Generating Economic Recovery (TIGER) Grant Program.
- Support continuation of and funding for the Transportation Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act (TIFIA).
- Support initiatives to fund construction and upgrades of existing highway infrastructure to interstate standards to complete Interstate 69 throughout Texas, specifically supporting an amendment designating State Highway 44 from Freer east to Corpus Christi as a “Future Segment of Interstate 69”.
- Support federal funding for construction of replacement of the Harbor Bridge (US 181) – a bridge of national significance.
- Support funding for railroad system improvements and improve funding to maintenance dredging for the Gulf Intracoastal Waterway to improve the Port of Corpus Christi.
- Support funding for freight rail that will improve the rail connectivity and make the rail system safer and more efficient, improve environmental sustainability and encourage competitive rail access to ports.
- Support funding for the Federal Aviation Administration and Transportation Security Administration to continue to provide safe and efficient passenger and freight movement.
- Support continued federal investment and priority into infrastructure to facilitate freight movement.
- Support I-69 being included in the designation of the National Freight Network now under consideration by the federal Department of Transportation.

Gulf of Mexico

- Support legislation, such as S. 1555/H.R. 3429 (Rigs-to-Reef Habitat Protection Act) or H.R. 6208 (REEFS Act) from 112th Congress, to prevent the U.S. Department of the Interior’s destructive Operations Idle Iron program that weakens artificial reef creation.
- Monitor Gulf of Mexico fisheries management proposals.

- Support implementation of the RESTORE Act.

Environmental Protection Agency

- Oppose overreaching, unrealistic, and unachievable standards and regulations for air, water, wastewater, and stormwater.
- When appropriate and when requested, assist state and local governments and local business and industry to secure necessary permits from EPA, USACE or other federal agencies.
- Support appropriations to EPA to allow the agency to invest and serve as a partner to municipal governments for construction and rehabilitation of infrastructure to achieve air, water, wastewater and stormwater goals.

Clean Water Act Renewal

- Support renewal/reauthorization of Clean Water Act
- Support changes to the CWA that incentivizes investments in municipal infrastructure to achieve improvements in water quality.
- Support changes to the CWA that gives cities flexibility to evaluate replacement costs to repair and maintenance costs and determine the most cost-effective, long-term solution.
- Support integrated planning initiatives to reduce sanitary sewer system overflows (SSOs).

Water Resources Development Act (WRDA)

- Support renewal of WRDA, including repeal of earmark ban.
- Support continued funding for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) and ensure strategic utilization of the Harbor Maintenance Trust Fund for maintenance and dredging projects.

Higher Education

- Support funding for academic and scientific research, student financial aid, and other federal initiatives that strengthens Coastal Bend higher education institutions.

Appointments

- Support prompt appointment and confirmation of a qualified, permanent U.S. District Judge for the Corpus Christi District to assure due process and equal justice under the law.

Flood Insurance

- Support amendments to the Biggert-Waters Flood Insurance Reform Act that delays implementation of the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) premium increases to consumers and ensures adequate policy coverage at affordable rates.

SECTION 4. The Legislative Priorities remain in effect until amended by the City Council.

SECTION 5. The City Manager is directed to distribute these Legislative Priorities to the local legislative delegation, legislative leadership, external legislative consultants, municipal advocacy organizations, federal municipal partners, community leadership, and community stakeholders to solicit their advice and support.

This resolution takes effect upon City Council approval on this the Tenth day of December, 2013.

ATTEST:

THE CITY OF CORPUS CHRISTI

Armando Chapa
City Secretary

Corpus Christi, Texas

Nelda Martinez
Mayor

Tenth of December, 2013

The above resolution was passed by the following vote:

Nelda Martinez _____

Kelley Allen _____

Rudy Garza _____

Priscilla Leal _____

David Loeb _____

Chad Magill _____

Colleen McIntyre _____

Lillian Riojas _____

Mark Scott _____