

RESOLUTION IN SUPPORT OF FEDERAL FUNDING FOR THE COMMUNITY SERVICE AGENCY

WHEREAS, President Donald Trump has proposed to move \$54 billion from human and environmental spending; and

WHEREAS, county governments provide the underlying infrastructure that enables residents to live productive lives in harmony with each other. Key county services are at risk under President Trump’s proposed budget; and

WHEREAS, Hidalgo County and governmental entities within the county could lose more than \$45 million in federal funding under the proposed budget. Among the cuts would be \$6,547,554 in funding to the Hidalgo County Community Service agency – which would effectively close down the program that assists the poorest residents in one of the poorest communities in the nation; and

WHEREAS, the more than \$6.5 million in cuts includes \$3,474,938 in the Comprehensive Energy Assistance Program (CEAP) ; \$1,695,865 in the Community Services Block Grant (CSBG); \$76,751 in the Retired Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP); and \$300,000 in Operation Bravo Zulu; and

WHEREAS, 319 U.S. veterans were assisted through Operation Bravo Zulu, receiving \$90,000 in utility assistance and 26 obtained referrals towards tuition assistance, medication discount program, food pantry, Texas Rural Legal Aid, Hidalgo County VSO, Family Endeavors, and CEAP; and

WHEREAS, in FY 2016 there were 8,475 households and 22,958 individuals assisted via the CEAP. In addition, 424 RSVP volunteers provided over 31,800 hours of service in 26 stations last year including the McAllen Veterans Administration Clinic, Driscoll Children’s Hospital, Museum of South Texas History, Ronald McDonald House, the American Red Cross and other stations – the service provided by the retired volunteers are valued at \$784,903.14; and

WHEREAS, an additional 9,109 households were helped via the CSBG. Of those, 20 percent were single parent households, 63 percent were disabled or receiving Supplemental Security Income, and 87 percent fell below the 100 percent Federal Poverty Level. In addition, CSBG funding assisted 23,978 individuals. Of those individuals, 39 percent were children under the age of 17, 28 percent were over the age of 55, and 27 percent had no health insurance; and

WHEREAS, Community Services Block Grants also helped transition 66 persons out of poverty, and provided much-needed support to Hidalgo County residents during emergencies. The CSA Emergency Services Unit (ESU) assisted 115 families with emergency gift cards for clothing, fuel, food and other essentials, 101 families were helped with temporary shelter, 11 families received assistance with cooling their homes via window units or air conditioning repairs, and 6 families received helped with automotive repairs so that they could remain employed following emergencies in 2016; and

WHEREAS, in 2017, the ESU has provided 44 families and 122 individuals with emergency assistance, 25 homeless families and 58 individuals were referred by school counselors, Catholic Social Services, the VA or other agencies, 13 families and 33 individuals have received emergency gift cards, temporary shelter and referrals to other agencies; five families and 26 individuals displaced by fire have been provided with essential supplies and temporary shelter.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Hidalgo County Commissioners Court urges the United States Congress to move our tax dollars back into programs and services that address poverty and help the most needy in Hidalgo County via the Community Services Agency.

Approved this 5th day of April, 2017.

RAMON GARCIA
County Judge

DAVID L. FUENTES
County Commissioner, Pct. 1

EDUARDO “EDDIE” CANTU
County Commissioner, Pct. 2

JOE M. FLORES
County Commissioner, Pct. 3

JOSEPH PALACIOS
County Commissioner, Pct. 4

Attest: **ARTURO GUAJARDO, JR.**
County Clerk