

For Immediate Release -- March 25, 2021



New Funding from City of Austin Will Allow American Gateways to Better Serve Community Members

American Gateways applauds the City of Austin’s commitment to its immigrant community members and families. On March 25, 2021, the Austin City Council approved an increase in funding to provide legal representation and services to its residents.

The lack of appointed counsel has a profound impact on immigrants’ ability to receive a fair hearing. Nationally, only 37% of all immigrants, and a mere 14% of detained immigrants, secured legal representation. What we do know that is [legal representation matters](#).

“We applaud the City’s efforts to ensure that our most vulnerable community members are given access to the justice system and, we are honored to be given this funding and to be able to work with Austin Public Health to help our community,” said Rebecca Lightsey, Co-Executive Director of American Gateways. “Expanding legal services funding for immigrants helps not only them, but our community overall. It ensures that immigrants’ due process rights are protected, ensures that their families can remain intact, and ensures that the economic benefits that immigrants provide to our community are recognized. The City Council vote makes Austin stronger overall.”

Lightsey went on to state, “We are so proud to live in a city that cares for the immigrant population and recognizes the benefit that legal representation and access to the justice system has for us all.”

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Those in need of immigration legal assistance can apply for services by contacting American Gateways M-Th from 9 am – 12 pm at 512-478-0546 ext. 200.

MORE: Contact Rebecca Lightsey, American Gateways, 512-478-0546 ext. 208 or rebeccal@americangateways.org

American Gateways champions the rights of immigrants, refugees and survivors of persecution, torture, conflict and human trafficking through immigration legal services, at low or no cost, as well as education and advocacy.