

RESOLUTION NO. 191-2018

**A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF ABILENE, TEXAS  
SETTING ITS 86<sup>TH</sup> LEGISLATIVE SESSION AGENDA**

**WHEREAS**, the City of Abilene wishes to express its desires and concerns regarding federal issues by adopting a legislative program; and

**WHEREAS**, the City of Abilene has developed recommendations for the federal legislative agenda.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF ABILENE:**

**PART 1.** That the City of Abilene's State Legislative Program for the 86<sup>th</sup> Session of the Texas State Legislature is hereby adopted.

**PART 2.** That this resolution shall take effect immediately from and after its passage in accordance with the provisions of the Charter of the City of Abilene, and it is accordingly so resolved.

**ADOPTED this 15<sup>th</sup> day of November 2018.**

ATTEST:

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Rosa Rios, City Secretary

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Anthony Williams, Mayor

APPROVED:

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Stanley Smith, City Attorney





CITY OF ABILENE

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## LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES FOR THE UPCOMING

### 86<sup>th</sup> TEXAS LEGISLATIVE SESSION

#### ELECTED AND APPOINTED OFFICIALS

Mayor

Anthony Williams

Shane Price  
Jack Rentz  
Donna Albus

Weldon Hurt  
Kyle McAlister  
Steve Savage

City Manager

Robert Hanna

Adopted: November 1, 2018

## **Section 1 – Council Strategic Goals and Priorities**

The City Council of the City of Abilene met on November 1, 2018 to ratify and affirm the following Strategic Goals and Priorities for the City of Abilene:

### **City Vision Statement**

Within thirty (30) years, the City of Abilene will be known as a thriving, national leader that other communities strive to be like, and where people consciously decide to live and locate their businesses. It will be a beautiful City, with quality, well maintained housing for all income levels, and well maintained municipal infrastructure. It will serve as a regional employment center and provide a rich and varied shopping experience. It will be a community that offers regionally renowned parks and recreation facilities and it will be well known for enjoying an excellent quality of life.

### **Council Strategic Goals**

- 1.3.1 The City of Abilene practices effective governance.
- 1.3.2 The City of Abilene exercises sound financial discipline.
- 1.3.3 The City of Abilene enjoys a high quality of life.
- 1.3.4 The City of Abilene is known for well-maintained and reliable municipal infrastructure.
- 1.3.5 The City of Abilene consistently provides excellent service.
- 1.3.6 The City of Abilene encourages economic growth.
- 1.3.7 The City of Abilene actively fosters and seeks an engaged community.

### **Council Priorities for FY 2018**

1. Infill Development

2. Downtown Hotel
3. Efficient and Cost Effective Government
4. Full Understanding of Deferred Maintenance and a Plan to Address it
5. Street Maintenance
6. Development along the I-20 Corridor

It is the express intent of the City Council of the City of Abilene that decisions regarding positions on legislative matters will be made in furtherance of these goals and priorities for the purpose of achieving the City's vision.

## **Section 2 – General Legislative Principles**

Texas has a rich history of encouraging and promoting local authority and local control of important community issues. The City of Abilene fundamentally believes that local governments are uniquely suited to determine how best to govern local affairs. In furtherance of this deeply held belief:

1. The City of Abilene will oppose legislation that erodes the City's authority to govern its own local affairs or erodes home rule authority for Texas cities in general.
2. The City of Abilene will oppose efforts to reduce or unreasonably limit its revenue sources.
3. The City of Abilene will oppose the imposition of additional unfunded state mandates.
4. The City of Abilene will oppose legislation that is detrimental to the long-term viability of Dyess Air Force Base.
5. The City of Abilene will support legislation that enhances the ability of the City to solve local problems or increase the quality of life of its citizens.
6. The City of Abilene will support legislation that enhances the agricultural, educational, cultural, tourism and infrastructure resource in the Big Country region.

## **Section 3 – Priority Legislative Initiatives**

The City of Abilene will actively seek the passage of the following initiatives using City staff and authorized representatives to secure legislators to author a bill, provide testimony, and advocate for the bill's passage throughout the legislative process.

- 1.) Appropriate money for the Defense Economic Adjustment Assistance Grant (DEEAG) program to fund military value projects that strengthen Texas military installations.
- 2.) Assist Texas military families by reducing barriers to full employment by authorizing reciprocity agreements for professional certifications and licensures.
- 3.) Assist the Texas Chapter of the Solid Waste Association of North America to protect solid waste employees engaged in the performance of their duties within the public right of way. **Background:** *Waste and recycling workers have the 5<sup>th</sup> deadliest job in the United States according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics. These jobs are ranked as deadlier than police officers, ambulance drivers, fire fighters, and tow truck drivers, all of whom are already protected under the law.*

#### **Section 4 – Statements of Support or Opposition**

The City of Abilene will not actively seek introduction of legislation for these legislative topics, but will actively support or oppose the passage of legislation and will engage City staff and authorized representatives if a bill is introduced addressing one of the following legislative concerns.

The City of Abilene will support legislation that:

- 1.) preserves the full funding of Texas tourism;
- 2.) reauthorizes municipal ad-valorem tax abatement authority (Texas Tax Code, Chapter 312), and in general, supports the continuation and sound use of current economic development tools;
- 3.) improves workforce development programs for military personnel and veterans;
- 4.) allows cities to more easily recover costs associated with addressing blighted or abandoned properties;
- 5.) increases state aid for municipal services, through grants or direct funding;

- 6.) allows municipalities to publish legal notices online rather than in a newspaper of general circulation;
- 7.) allows the Texas Municipal Retirement System to be soundly funded, and continues to allow member cities the ability to establish their own benefit design for competitive recruitment and retention;
- 8.) continues to fund or provides funding for state and local mental health programs;
- 9.) enhances the economic opportunities and development of municipal airports; and,
- 10.) continues access to the Texas Military Value Revolving Loan Fund.

The City of Abilene will oppose legislation that:

- 1.) lowers the current appraisal cap for Texas taxing entities;
- 2.) imposes revenue caps for Texas taxing entities;
- 3.) lowers the rollback rate, or reduces the rollback petition requirements for Texas taxing entities;
- 4.) imposes a mandatory tax rate ratification election;
- 5.) unnecessarily restricts or otherwise reduces the City's existing authority under State statute to issue debt;
- 6.) removes or otherwise restricts the City's original jurisdiction for the utility rate setting process for gas and electric utilities, or changes the City's existing ability to recover expenses associated with initiating gas or electric utility rate cases;
- 7.) further reduces or restricts municipal authority to annex land or exercise eminent domain authority;
- 8.) increases the City's cost of providing municipal services without an offsetting benefit, diminishes the current authority of cities to regulate development, or imposes unfunded mandates; and,