

CITY OF FORNEY, TEXAS

RESOLUTION NO. 20-15

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF FORNEY, TEXAS, OPPOSING PROPOSITION 3 APPROVED AT THE MARCH 3, 2020 STATEWIDE ELECTION ADVOCATING FOR THE ENDING OF TAXPAYER-FUNDED LOBBYING.

WHEREAS, Senate Bill 29, authored and introduced by Senator Bob Hall (District 2) in the most recent Texas Legislative session (86th Regular Session), proposed a ban that would have prevented governmental entities from advocating at the State Capitol by prohibiting taxpayer-funded lobbying over matters significant to City government, City residents, and other local governmental entities; and

WHEREAS, the vote on approval of Senate Bill 29 failed by 18 votes in the House of Representatives; and

WHEREAS, Proposition 3 on the ballot at the most recent statewide election provided that “Texas should ban the practice of taxpayer-funded lobbying, which allows your tax dollars to be spent on lobbyists who work against the taxpayer”, (“Proposition 3”), and as worded, Proposition 3 was overly broad and completely misleading to the voters; and

WHEREAS, Proposition 3 was approved by the voters at the March 3, 2020 election; therefore, the same issues set forth in Senate Bill 29 will be considered again in the upcoming Texas Legislative session (87th Regular Session), and if acted upon, Proposition 3 will effectively prevent a City and members of its City Council from advocating at the Capitol over matters significant to City residents; and

WHEREAS, if Proposition 3 is used as a basis for the State Legislature to again consider regulations similar to those in failed Senate Bill 29, it will operate to prevent political subdivisions throughout the state from spending public money to join their respective professional associations; and

WHEREAS, professional associations for municipalities, counties and independent school districts (TML, TAC, TASB, ATMOS Steering Committee, ONCOR Steering Committee, TCAP – Texas Coalition for Affordable Power, and others) provide much more assistance to political subdivisions than lobbying efforts that occur every two years, and

WHEREAS, smaller political subdivisions across the state, do not have the resources to represent themselves during the legislative session(s), or the other very important ancillary services (legal services, training, risk pool insurance protection, etc.) rendered by these professional associations.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF FORNEY, TEXAS:

Section 1. That the foregoing recitals are findings of the City Council of the City of Forney, are true and correct, and are incorporated into this Resolution as if fully set forth hereinbelow.

Section 2. That the City Council of the City of Forney strongly opposes any legislation that would serve to “limit the governing body of a political subdivision to spend public money to directly or indirectly influence or attempt to influence the outcome of any legislation pending before the legislature related to: taxation; bond elections; tax-supported debt; and ethics and transparency of public servants” as originally proposed by failed Senate Bill 29. Any effort to eliminate the City’s ability to spend public monies to join their various professional associations simply because of ancillary lobbying efforts of those associations provided during the biannual Legislative sessions would severely restrict the efficiency and effectiveness of the City’s local governance.

Section 3. The City of Forney City Council supports the right of any institution or entity, whether public or private, to engage expert and professional assistance to exercise its constitutional right to petition the government for causes that would serve to improve the quality of life or standing of its members. Recognizing that both private entities and local governmental entities should have equal access to professional assistance in dealing with the complexities of state government.

Section 4. That the Forney City Council hereby expresses its desire to maintain and fund with public moneys its memberships with the various professional associations and statewide municipal steering committees that provide much needed direction and specialized assistance related to day-to-day City operations, regardless of the other activities of such professional associations.

Section 5. This Resolution shall become effective immediately upon its passage.

PASSED AND APPROVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF FORNEY, TEXAS, this 17th day of March, 2020.

ATTEST:

Mary Penn, Mayor

Dorothy Brooks, City Secretary