



Metropolitan Nashville and Davidson County, TN

Legislation Text

File #: RS2022-1560, **Version:** 1

A resolution appropriating \$1,820,585 in American Rescue Plan Act funds from Fund #30216 to expand critical immigrant legal services in Davidson County.

WHEREAS, on June 15, 2021, the Metropolitan Council passed Resolution RS2021-966, a resolution which accepted grant funds for local government support from the Coronavirus State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds established by the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 ("ARP Funds") from the U.S. Department of the Treasury to The Metropolitan Government of Nashville and Davidson County, which was subsequently signed into law by Mayor John Cooper on June 16, 2021; and,

WHEREAS, Resolution RS2021-966 established a COVID-19 Financial Oversight Committee ("the Committee") whose role is to collect, consider, and recommend appropriate uses of the ARP Funds as designated by the Metropolitan Council disbursement plan. The Committee will submit its reports and recommendations to the Mayor, the Director of Finance, and the Metropolitan Council not later than June 30, 2025; and,

WHEREAS, there are federal requirements for use of ARP Funds that require that these funds be expended or obligated on or before December 31, 2024; and,

WHEREAS, the Committee recognizes that Davidson County is home to a diverse and vibrant immigrant population, many of need high-quality, low-cost immigrant legal services; and,

WHEREAS, the Committee recognizes that Davidson County is an immigrant legal services desert, with only six pro-bono organizations that offer only limited services for immigrant cases in Nashville; and,

WHEREAS, changes in immigration policy in recent years and the COVID-19 pandemic have exacerbated the negative effects of insufficient immigrant legal services for families across Davidson County; and,

WHEREAS, the Tennessee Immigrant & Refugee Rights Coalition ("the TIRRC"), a statewide, immigrant and refugee-led collaboration, has proposed a two-year pilot program that will provide essential services to keep families united and increase access to opportunities; scale TIRRC's staff and program capacity; promote community education and legal services; and invest in the Tennessee Justice for Our Neighbors ("the TNJFON") staff and program capacity, as further described in Exhibit A; and,

WHEREAS, at this time, due to limited available ARP Funds, the Committee seeks to fund 87% of the first 24 months of the proposed request in Exhibit A, with the expectation that the remainder of the program may be approved when further ARP Funds become available; and,

WHEREAS, it is to the benefit of the citizens of The Metropolitan Government of Nashville and Davidson County that this resolution be approved.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE METROPOLITAN GOVERNMENT OF NASHVILLE AND DAVIDSON COUNTY:

Section 1. The Metropolitan Council accepts this resolution as a recommendation of the COVID-19 Financial Oversight Committee.

Section 2. That \$ 1,820,585.00 from the Covid-19 American Rescue Plan Fund #30216 is hereby

appropriated to the TIRRC to be used to administer the program described in Exhibit A.

Section 3. This resolution shall take effect from and after its final passage, the welfare of the public requiring it.

Analysis

This resolution appropriates \$1,820,585 in American Rescue Plan Act (ARP) funds to expand critical immigration legal services in Davidson County. Davidson County is home to a diverse and vibrant immigrant population, many in need of immigrant legal services. Davidson County has six pro-bono organizations that offer limited services for immigrant cases in Nashville.

The Tennessee Immigrant & Refugee Rights Coalition (“TIRRC”) is a statewide, immigrant and refugee-led collaboration. TIRRC has proposed a two-year pilot program to provide essential services to keep families united and increase access to opportunities, scale TIRRC’s staff and program capacity, promote community education and legal services, and invest in the Tennessee Justice for Our Neighbors (“TNJFON”) staff and program capacity. The program is described in further detail in Exhibit A, which is attached to the resolution.

This resolution appropriates \$1,820,585 in ARP funding to TIRRC to administer this program. This represents 87% of the proposed request.

Fiscal Note: This \$1,820,585 appropriation, along with the appropriations per Resolution No. RS2022-1558 and Resolution No. RS2022-1559 would be the 24th, 25th and 26th resolutions appropriating from the American Recovery Plan Act (ARP) Fund for a cumulative total of \$110,508,686. The total grant award is \$259,810,600 and the first half of this amount was received in July 2021.