



October 11, 2022

RE: PROPOSAL FOR SERVICES

The Honorable Connie Schroeder
Mayor, City of Bastrop
311 Chestnut Street
Bastrop, Texas 78602

Dear Mayor,

Thank you for inviting Focused Advocacy to propose our professional state government advocacy and consultation services for your city.

The Focused Advocacy team—Brandon Aghamalian, Snapper Carr, Andrew Keefer, Josh Meeks, Curt Seidlits and Lynlie Wallace—would be honored to represent the City of Bastrop.

The following pages highlight the strengths of our firm—primarily the history and qualifications of our team, our expertise with local government issues, and our track record of helping our clients achieve success.

Thank you and please contact Brandon Aghamalian at **512-695-6709** if you have any questions.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "BTL".

Brandon Aghamalian

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Snapper Carr".

Snapper Carr

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Curt Seidlits".

Curt Seidlits



PROPOSAL

Focused Advocacy respectfully proposes the following terms:

- 24-month term from October 1, 2020 through September 30, 2022 with two options to renew;
- \$8,333.33 monthly retainer (\$100,000 annual); and
- \$350 flat monthly expense reimbursement for expenses stemming from client-related business meetings in furtherance of the duties and services required.

Lastly, Focused Advocacy will request reimbursement for any reasonable and customary expenses related to travel requested by the client (i.e. – airfare, mileage reimbursement, rental cars, transportation network companies, hotels, travel-related meals, etc.).

These proposed terms are both competitive and within the market norms for what other qualified lobby firms would propose for the anticipated workload.



ABOUT US

Focused Advocacy is a premier public affairs and lobbying firm that specializes in representing cities. Our firm is organized around five core practice areas — Local Government Advocacy, Infrastructure, Utilities (energy, telecom and water), Economic Development and Business Development. Our team possesses established, measurable expertise within each of these disciplines, as illustrated by our accompanying biographies.

Focused Advocacy continues to set best practices for municipal, economic development, and utility-related advocacy. We take pride in our subject matter knowledge, our commitment to the clients, and our consistent performance at the highest ethical standards.

Municipal Specialists. Founded in 2009, our firm was created with the express purpose of providing lobbying services to local governments and to provide our clients with a team of subject matter experts. As such, Focused Advocacy enjoys the experience that comes with our long history of representing cities before the legislature. No other lobby team in Austin spends more time at the Capitol lobbying on behalf of municipal issues than Focused Advocacy. Our knowledge of municipal issues is simply unmatched within the lobby.

Focused Advocacy has a proven track record of success. Our firm boasts an impressive record of success—passing over 80 percent of our clients’ legislative initiatives. (Note: the average passage rate in the Texas Legislature is 20 percent). Our team has passed or defeated more local government-related legislation than any other lobby firm in history. Due to our successes, Focused Advocacy has repeatedly been recognized as one of the most influential lobby teams in the state (*Capitol Inside Lobby Rankings 2011, 2013, 2015, 2017, and 2019*).

Focused Advocacy is an experienced, bipartisan firm. We offer our clients a team of four (4) lobbyists, with the expertise of a former state legislator, former Director of Governmental Relations for the City of Fort Worth, former TML legislative and legal counselor, and a former member of Governor Perry’s policy staff. We bring to bear more than 100 years of combined experience, skill, and bipartisan relationships inside the Texas Capitol and regulatory agencies.



TEAM MEMBERS & AREAS OF EXPERTISE

TEAM MEMBER	AREAS OF EXPERTISE	
Brandon Aghamalian President	Economic Development Municipal Law Taxes and Appraisals Transit	Land Use Public Finance State Budget Transportation
Snapper Carr Partner & General Counsel	Energy Military/VA Issues Oil and Gas Telecommunications Water	Land Use Municipal Law Pensions Utilities Regulatory Agencies
Curtis Seidlits CEO	Civil law Energy Municipal law Telecommunications	Criminal law Land Use Utilities Executive Branch
Andrew Keefer Senior Associate	Energy Municipal Law Transit Utilities	Military/VA Oil and Gas Transportation Regulatory Agencies
Lynlie Wallace Legislative & Regulatory Counsel	Water Municipal Law Utilities Utilities	Military/VA Oil and Gas Transportation Regulatory Agencies
Josh Meeks Communications Director	Communications Crisis Management	Social Media Advocacy Materials



BIOGRAPHIES

Brandon Aghamalian is a recognized expert on municipal issues, public finance, economic development, property taxes, and transportation. Aghamalian joined Focused Advocacy in 2010 to co-found the firm's lobby and local government practice. Prior to that, Aghamalian co-founded the local government practice for HillCo Partners. From 2002 to 2006, Aghamalian served as the Director of Government Relations for the City of Fort Worth in the administrations of Mayor Ken Barr and Mayor Mike Moncrief. Prior to that, Aghamalian worked as the Director of the House Committee on Business and Industry, Chief of Staff for State Representative Kim Brimer, and Legislative Director for Representative Todd Smith. Aghamalian earned a BA in Accounting from Texas State University, a Doctor of Jurisprudence from The University of Texas School of Law and a Master of Public Affairs from the LBJ School of Public Affairs.

Snapper Carr joined Focused Advocacy in 2010 to co-found the firm's lobby and local government practice. His primary focus is representing the needs of local governments before the Texas Legislature. From 2006 to 2010, Carr co-founded the local government practice for HillCo Partners, representing dozens of cities before the Legislature. Previously, Carr served as the Legislative Counsel and Associate for the Texas Municipal League (TML) from 1998 to 2006, where he represented municipal interests and earned a reputation as an expert in the fields of land usage, utilities, military and water issues. From 1994 to 1998, Carr served as the committee clerk for the House Committee on State Affairs and House Committee on Land and Resource Management. Carr has a bachelor's degree in Communications and Government from The University of Texas and a Doctor of Jurisprudence from the UT School of Law.

The Honorable Curtis Seidlits is one of Austin's premier government affairs and lobby strategists. Before founding Focused Advocacy, Seidlits spent thirteen years as the Senior Vice President of Public Affairs for Energy Future Holdings, formerly TXU Corp, where he oversaw federal, state, and local governmental advocacy, public policy and the company's political action committees. At TXU, he helped engineer the changes establishing competition in the electric industry. Before joining TXU, Seidlits served as president and CEO of the Association of Electric Companies of Texas (AECT), a group representing the state's investor-owned electric companies. From 1986-1996, Seidlits served in the Texas House of Representatives where he was appointed to a variety of committees including Judiciary, Ways and Means, Elections and Redistricting. In 1993, he was appointed chairman of the House State Affairs Committee and oversaw tort reform, ethics, utilities, and public information. Seidlits authored legislation that substantially rewrote the state's electric and telecommunications regulations. Seidlits earned both his law degree and bachelor's degree in political science from Baylor University. He began his career as a prosecutor and has over forty years of legal experience.



Andrew Keefer provides counsel on regulatory issues that require navigating the complicated regulatory landscape at the Public Utility Commission, the Railroad Commission of Texas, and Texas Commission on Environmental Quality. Prior to private practice, Keefer served as Chief of Staff for the Chair of the Texas Railroad Commission where he participated in the regulation of the oil and gas industry, pipelines, alternative energy and surface and uranium mining. At the Commission, he authored congressional testimony and helped implement the Hydraulic Fracturing Disclosure Rule. Prior to that, Keefer worked for Governor Rick Perry's energy and environment policy team. Previously, Keefer served as Chief of Staff for Representatives Linda Harper-Brown and Corbin Van Arsdale. Keefer studied at Abilene Christian University, attended the Institute for Economics at the State University of Campinas in Campinas, Sao Paulo, Brazil, and graduated from the University of Texas at Austin with a bachelor's degree in Latin American Studies. He is fluent in Portuguese and proficient in Spanish.

Lynlie Wallace, with 17 years of experience in facilitating the development of public policy in both local and state government, provides strategic counsel to a diverse client base to aid in the development of individualized strategies to achieve clients' legislative goals. Prior to joining Focused Advocacy, Lynlie served for over a decade as chief of staff to the chairman of the Texas House Natural Resources Committee. Her background includes staffing the Bexar County Commissioners Court staff, consulting on federal, state, and municipal political campaigns, and serving as an account executive for a regional public relations firm. Lynlie holds a Bachelor of Arts in Government from Angelo State University and Doctor of Jurisprudence from St. Mary's University School of Law.

Josh Meeks is a seasoned public affairs professional who specializes in creative communication solutions at the Texas Capitol and statewide. The founder of Republic Square Media, Josh delivers writing, digital design and storytelling support to former and current clients include local governments, issue campaigns, statewide trade associations, Fortune 10 companies, and more. Josh's work inside the Texas Legislature includes nearly a decade of service as legislative director and communications director in the Senate, where he staffed the Senate Finance Committee, state budget conference committee, and more. Josh currently manages Focused Advocacy's communications, social media and crisis management operations.



OUR APPROACH

Our firm's approach to advocating is most accurately described as: ***Hands-On, Detailed, Relationship-Driven, and Ethical.***

Hands-On

Legislative success is typically obtained by first formulating specific legislative objectives accompanied by an investment of time and energy to truly understand your issues. Using the full resources of our team, we develop the right strategy, implement the right tactics and deploy our extensive network of state government relationships to achieve success for our clients. To accomplish that objective, we intend to operate as an extension of your staff acting as the City's "boots on the ground" at the Capitol, operating as an extension of your team. The members of our team are uniquely qualified to handle *any* issue the City faces regardless of how intricate they are. Our team will confer with City leadership to formulate specific, immediate, and long-range objectives to develop a finely tuned legislative agenda that focuses on the City's goals.

Detailed

During the legislative session, we closely monitor all filed legislation, identifying pertinent bills to bring to your attention and drafting amendments as necessary. We provide notice of and monitor all committee hearings. When required, we help prepare your team to testify and arrange meetings with legislators and Capitol staff. We actively work the "calendar" process and monitor all daily sessions of the House and Senate. Throughout it all, Focused Advocacy actively works to solicit support for your legislative agenda and represents the City during behind-the-scenes negotiations. In order to keep our team coordinated, we hold regular meetings and/or conference calls with City staff. We develop a significant number of deliverables for our clients, including bill analyses, memorandum, speeches, talking points, memos, letters of support, collateral material and presentations. We will also publish a regular e-mail newsletter about important developments.

Outside of the session, during the interim, our services focus on monitoring state agencies, interim committee hearings, and staying abreast of municipal developments throughout the state. We confer regularly with TML, meet with legislators and staff to maintain relationships, host political events at our office, and actively participate in campaigns and fundraisers.

Relationship-Driven

Focused Advocacy maintains longstanding positive working relationships throughout all levels of state government, interacting regularly with everyone in the legislative process from the Governor to freshman legislators to state agency personnel. We are viewed by most as "the city



lobbyists” and as such, elected officials consistently turn to our team for counsel on a wide range of municipal issues. Our reputation as “the city team” greatly enhances our ability to achieve positive results for our clients. Additionally, we have a deep understanding of the history of municipal issues within the legislature, and how key stakeholders react to issues. This institutional knowledge allows us to avoid pitfalls while increasing our overall chances of achieving success for your agenda.

The Focused Advocacy team has worked hard over the years to develop positive working relationships with all levels of state government (legislative, executive and judicial), and with both political parties. Due to these longstanding relationships, we are confident of our ability to represent your needs and protect the City’s best interests. While we passionately represent our clients—even when it means lining up against our friends in the Legislature—we do so with respect for the legislative process and the ebb and flow of professional debate, recognizing that today’s adversary can be tomorrow’s ally. We always work to defeat detrimental legislation with the goal of maintaining a positive relationship for future issues. Additionally, we participate actively in the campaign process, making political contributions through our Focused Advocacy Political Action Committee (PAC).

Ethical

At all times, the Focused Advocacy team adheres to the highest ethical and professional standards. Our reputation for integrity and “straight talk” is known throughout the Capitol community. Maintaining our positive reputation among key state agency leadership and legislators greatly enhances our ability to achieve positive results for your City. In addition, we offer your City a “conflict free” relationship. In fact, our firm has never filed a conflict of interest at the Texas Ethics Commission and has never had a conflict with a city client. We also understand the sensitivities that come with representing a public entity, such as open records and open meeting laws, and act accordingly.