

Building well-being for everyone in our community is at the core of our work at Caritas of Austin. With that aim, our organization cannot support Proposition A on this November's ballot.

The estimated cost of Proposition A is \$271.5 – \$598.8 million over the next five years, which will come at the expense of local parks, libraries, EMS services, and the entire social services ecosystem of our community including our work at Caritas of Austin.

We have great respect and gratitude for the Austin Police Department and support its service to our city. But keeping our city safe requires comprehensive public safety, with many layers of support in tandem with the work of Austin Police Department. When Austin residents enjoy economic and social stability, our community is safer.

Proposition A would require Austin to have two police officers per 1,000 people. Currently, we have 1.7 officers per 1,000. The 2/1,000 ratio method, along with the dated "more cops less crime" argument, is discouraged by many local, national, and international policing authorities who advise against using population rates for determining police staffing needs.

Over-dependence on policing to ensure safety, is to operate from fear, instead of a commitment to building well-being for all members. Crime is reduced when people have access to healthcare, food, and transportation, and wraparound support services to address their needs.

Caritas of Austin sees this firsthand in our work. An individual experiencing homelessness can potentially cost public systems \$222,000 per person annually. Caritas provides this same individual permanent housing and support at a cost of \$23,480 per year. Once housed, Caritas clients realized an 88% reduction in 911 and EMS response.

We urge community members to independently research and determine whether Proposition A is an effective use of taxpayer monies. We believe increased policing should not come at the expense of other critical services that build well-being and make our city great. The unsustainable cost proposed in Proposition A is one we hope each Austinite will consider before voting.

Caritas of Austin urges you to vote NO on Proposition A.