



Legal Services Committee
April 20, 2023

Amy Smith	HCDVCC
Rebecca Councill	HCDVCC
Samantha Del Bosque	Tahirih Justice Center
Sarah Bryan	Advocates for Immigrant Survivors
Maisha Colter	AVDA
Deborah Alexis	HCDVCC
Katisha Chaney	BATP
Stefanie Hayes	HCDVCC
Felicia Young	Family House Scholar
Nakia Hanson	HCDVCC
Selena Garcia	GHIRP

Amy Smith opened the meeting and welcomed everyone.

Selena Garcia introduced us to her agency GHIRP. They have 2 offices, one in Houston and one in Galveston. They provided consultation on Immigration issues. They also provide free services and consultation on the 3rd Tuesday of the month for DV survivors. They have a small team with an extensive waiting list. They also do a Know Your Rights for Immigrant Survivors. And they help unaccompanied minors in the detention centers.

Sarah Bryan gave an update on Advocates for Immigrant Survivors. She has recently joined the Staff and have capacity to help any immigrant crime victim. They will have a full time Survivor Advocate starting May 1st. They are looking to strengthen their community partnerships.

Katisha Chaney announced that BATP is having a karaoke night to round out Sexual Assault Awareness Month and she reminded everyone about Denim Day on April 26th. BATP is almost fully staffed. And their shelter remains full.

Felicia Young Family Scholar House works with single parents and their goal is to build a better life for survivors by helping them while they are getting an education.

Stefanie Hayes talked about the Expect Respect Program. The program is for 6th -12th graders to promote healthy relationships and prevent kids from being abused or being abusers. The program also realizes that they need to affect these kids' home environment as well.

Deborah Alexis reminded everyone about the 280th's Open House on April 26th.

Maisha Coulter discussed the Rahimi Case in the 5th Circuit Court -The Department of Justice has taken the case to the Supreme Court. They gave the defendant in the case until May 23rd to respond to the filing. If 5 of the 9 Judges agree they can issue a stay of the 5th Circuit Ruling. However, it does not appear that there will be a decision before the Legislature ends. If nothing is done, we must wait 2 years before we can change anything through the Texas Legislature.

Other bills discussed: SB 48- Mandatory Forms for P. O's

HB 855- Judicial Training on DV- some concern about the quality of training that will be provided. Last time something like this past several agencies popped up to do the training with little to no actual DV experience.

Amy Smith discussed that this Committee has been asked to do Criminal Justice Training. The High-Risk Team and Law Enforcement have found that advocates do not seem to understand the criminal justice system and need a better understanding of it to provide their clients with information about all of their choices. It was also suggested that training be held on Family Courts in general and how to navigate the Child Support process.

Selena Garcia also let everyone know that the Enhanced Library Card is still working its way through the process to become a secondary form of ID.

Our next meeting will be on May 18th at 11:30 via ZOOM.

Meeting adjourned.