



July 27, 2020

The Honorable Kathryn Barger
 Chair, Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors
 Kenneth Hahn Hall of Administration
 500 West Temple St., Suite 869
 Los Angeles, CA 90012
kathryn@bos.lacounty.gov

Re: 7/28/20 Board Agenda Items 1-3: Request to suspend consideration of the Community Reinvestment and Housing Stabilization Charter Amendment for the November 3, 2020 ballot.

Dear Supervisor Barger,

The Board of Directors of the Los Angeles County Division of the League of California Cities® (Division), representing 86 cities in the county, by unanimous agreement, urges the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors (BOS) to suspend consideration of Board Agenda Items 1-3 to adopt an ordinance and resolution to place the Community Reinvestment and Housing Stabilization Charter Amendment on the November 3, 2020 ballot until a more comprehensive public engagement process and analysis is conducted.

We find the Board's intent to address social justice and equity in Los Angeles County laudable and worth the attention of every local government in the county. However, we have significant procedural and fiscal concerns with placing a measure to cement permanent categorical spending in the county's budget without fully understanding the consequences, intended or unintended, to all county services, our cities and our communities.

The BOS is considering this charter amendment in a special meeting to meet the August 7, 2020 Registrar Recorder deadline to call a special election, but should not adopt the ordinance and resolution for the following reasons:

1. **The proposed charter amendment is rushed, lacks transparency, and stakeholder engagement.** This measure was crafted by one stakeholder, yet past election results demonstrate that voters support county measures with broad and thoughtful stakeholder involvement. As noted by the July 21 Los Angeles Times editorial, this proposal was placed on the BOS agenda last minute without time for stakeholders to fully review its impacts or engage in a comprehensive discussion on the issue, much less develop a full understanding of its fiscal or policy impacts.
2. **The BOS has existing authority to prioritize its unrestricted funds.** Like city councils, the BOS has existing authority to spend its discretionary funds according to its policy priorities through an annual budget process with a simple majority vote. It is unnecessary to permanently restrict future budget spending for this Board or future Boards through a charter amendment.
3. **Fiscal implications have not been analyzed.** Under the current proposal, cities and county residents have no way to determine if the charter amendments have positive or negative impacts on existing county services. The only "analysis" we have is the

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county Chief Administrative Officers' verbal testimony on July 21 expressing concerns about limiting budgetary flexibility, especially during economic uncertainty like we are currently experiencing with the COVID-19 pandemic. The CAO also testified that the charter amendment, as proposed, would likely cause department cuts and potential staff layoffs starting in fiscal year 21/22. These concerns and their unknown effects on wider service provisions to our residents and our cities warrant a full impartial analysis from the county before moving forward.

Again, we urge the board to suspend its efforts to rush a permanent change to its charter without a more comprehensive discussion and engagement with all stakeholders that want to be at the table. We know our contributions bring value to these important policy discussions and we would like to engage with the board on this timely discussion. Our past support of county initiatives like the Safe, Clean Water Measure (W), the Homeless Services Initiative (Measure H), and the Neighborhood Parks and Beaches Measure (A), prove that when the county and cities work together, not only are we successful in gaining the trust of voters to advance major policy efforts, we can create meaningful changes in Los Angeles County. Let's take the time this issue deserves to accomplish that and get it right, it's worth it.

Thank you for your consideration of our request.

Regards,



Juan Garza
President, Los Angeles County Division, League of California Cities
Mayor, City of Bellflower

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