

Your Community Impact Statement has been successfully submitted to City Council and Committees.

If you have questions and/or concerns, please contact the Department of Neighborhood Empowerment at [NCsupport@lacity.org](mailto:NCsupport@lacity.org).

This is an automated response, please do not reply to this email.

#### Contact Information

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The Board approved this CIS by a vote of: Yea(18) Nay(00) Abstain(0) Ineligible(0) Recusal(0)

Date of NC Board Action: 07/16/2020

Type of NC Board Action: For

#### Impact Information

Date: 08/21/2020

Update to a Previous Input: Yes

Directed To: City Council and Committees

Council File Number: 20-0718

Agenda Date: 07/16/2020

Item Number: GB071620-6

Summary: The South Robertson Neighborhood Council extends its support to this motion (Council File 20-0718) calling for the City Attorney to not prosecute and to drop all charges against protestors whose crimes are curfew violations or failure to comply with orders to disperse. The protestors in question were exercising their right to free speech and were not engaged in theft or property damage. Protecting freedom of speech is essential to our democracy. Our neighbors need to feel safe to demonstrate peacefully without fear of fine or imprisonment.



**Council File: 20-0718**

## **Community Impact Statement**

**As adopted by vote of the SORO NC governing board:**

**Yes: 18    No: 0    Abstain: 0    Ineligible: 0    Recuse: 0**

**Adopted: 07/16/20**

**Position: For**

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The South Robertson Neighborhood Council extends its support to this motion (Council File 20-0718) calling for the City Attorney to not prosecute and to drop all charges against protestors whose crimes are curfew violations or failure to comply with orders to disperse. The protestors in question were exercising their right to free speech and were not engaged in theft or property damage. Protecting freedom of speech is essential to our democracy. Our neighbors need to feel safe to demonstrate peacefully without fear of fine or imprisonment.

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**Martin Epstein**  
President

**Ken Blaker**  
Vice-President

**Jon Liberman**  
Treasurer

**Vacant**  
Secretary

**Charlie Stein**  
Corresponding Secretary

**Submitted by: Martin Epstein**

**South Robertson  
Neighborhoods Council**

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# Motion to File Community Impact Statement Urging No Prosecution of Nonviolent Protestors

**Agenda Item:** GB071620 - 6  
**Date:** July 16, 2020  
**Proposed By:** Jessica Barclay-Strobel  
**Include motion in Consent Agenda? (No)**

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## Background

In 2017, members of Refuse Fascism were arrested and prosecuted for their alleged role in planning or participating in peaceful protests.<sup>1</sup> In late June 2020, those charges were dismissed after several trials revealed that the Los Angeles Police Department “placed an informant inside of [this] non-violent political group” and recorded its meetings at a religious institution. Reporting also revealed that, when surveilling Refuse Fascism, “LAPD did not conduct any similar surveillance operations on right-wing political groups.” As a Refuse Fascism member explained upon learning of the dismissal while awaiting her third trial on these charges, dismissal was timely and important given that recently “LAPD arrested thousands of people for violating curfews or failing to obey dispersal orders during days of protests in response to George Floyd’s murder.”

The LA City Council has the opportunity to vote on a motion (Council File 20-0718) urging no prosecution of protestors who were arrested for violating curfews or failing to obey dispersal orders. Dropping charges and foregoing prosecution now would mean that these protestors do not have to wait the three years it took for Refuse Fascism members to obtain dismissal of their charges.

Concerned that prosecution of peaceful protestors chills free speech, the Palms Neighborhood Council voted on July 2, 2020, to submit to the abovementioned Council File a similar community impact statement to the one attached here.

## Proposed Motion

SORO NC shall file by August 2, 2020, the attached community impact statement in Council File 20-0718.

**Martin Epstein**  
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Vice-President

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<sup>1</sup> This background and quotations are from the following LA Times articles: (1) <https://www.latimes.com/california/story/2020-06-25/city-attorney-drops-all-charges-against-anti-trump-protest-group-that-lapd-spied-on> and (2) <https://www.latimes.com/california/story/2019-07-19/lapd-informant-recorded-trump-protesters>



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## Considerations

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### Arguments for:

Protestors may be emboldened to exercise their First Amendment rights if they do not fear fines or imprisonment for doing so.

### Arguments against:

Protestors may be emboldened to exercise their First Amendment rights if they do not fear fines or imprisonment for doing so.