

MOTION

The past year has seen a tremendous number of large-scale street demonstrations and protests regarding racial justice, police shootings, homelessness, and other pressing issues. It has also seen an increase in the number of arrests and detainments of working journalists assigned to cover those protests.

In September, Los Angeles County sheriff's deputies violently tackled KPCC reporter Josie Huang and arrested her on claims she had interfered with the arrest of a man outside of a hospital where two deputies were being treated for gunshot wounds. The District Attorney refused to press charges when it was proven Huang had identified herself as a journalist.

Last month, Lexis-Olivier Ray of LA TACO received a letter from the Los Angeles city attorney's office notifying him that he faced a criminal charge for failing to follow an LAPD officer's order to disperse during Dodgers victory celebrations, which he was covering, in October. An LA Times investigation found that Ray was the only person charged with failure to disperse among hundreds in the street that night. Free press advocates have expressed concern the action was retaliatory because Ray had recorded and distributed video showing a group of LAPD officers charging toward him, shoving him down and raising their batons as he screamed he was "press." The video amassed more than 400,000 views on Twitter and prompted the LAPD to open an internal affairs investigation.

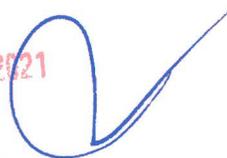
Last week, several journalists were detained or arrested by LAPD during demonstrations at Echo Lake Park. Those journalists including James Queally of the Los Angeles Times, who was put into zip-ties, even as he had a police-issued credential hanging around his neck, and Kate Cagle of Spectrum News 1 SoCal, who clearly identified herself as a reporter and was with her camera crew preparing for a live shot when she was detained. Queally and Cagle were released within hours. Reporters Jonathan Peltz and Kate Gallagher of the independent news outlet Knock LA were held for a longer period of time.

In the days following last week's arrests, reporters have complained that the Los Angeles Police Department tried to confine them to a "press pen" far from the demonstrations they were assigned to cover, that the LAPD has slowed or ceased issuing press credentials, and that LAPD has unclear policies or standards for how members of independent media can become credentialed.

The right of a free press to cover demonstrations, political protest and police activity is essential to a functioning democracy and must be preserved.

**I THEREFORE MOVE** that the Council request LAPD report back on the detaining of journalists in recent protests and demonstrations, including during protests over racial injustice during the summer of 2020, demonstrations after the Dodgers World Series victory the night of October 27, 2020, and demonstrations in Echo Park on March 24-26, 2021. The report should include:

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- The number of journalists detained, the duration of their detainment, and reasoning behind such actions;
- Release of all information about arrests of or physical interactions with the press to the public

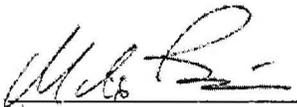
**I FURTHER MOVE** that the Council request LAPD report back on procedures and issues surrounding issuing press credentials, including:

- Procedures for recognizing press credentials
- Criteria for issuing credentials
- Technical challenges and average time it takes to issue an LAPD press credential
- Training currently conducted to ensure LAPD quickly and correctly identifies members of the news media at newsworthy events like demonstrations
- Enforcement and discipline for officers who do not follow protocol

**I FURTHER MOVE** that the Council request LAPD to report back on crowd control procedures involving journalists, including:

- Procedures and protocols LAPD follows to allow journalists freedom of movement to cover events such as demonstrations, including ensuring that members of the news media are exempt from mobility restrictions and curfews
- Training LAPD officers to ensure their awareness of journalists' rights to freedom of movement.

PRESENTED BY:



MIKE BONIN

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SECONDED BY:

